A DISCOURSE Concerning Generosity.

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THE PREFACE.

SInce we find 'tis ſo difficult a thing to engage Men to the ſincere Love and Practice of Vertue and Goodneſs; It is but reaſonable that we make uſe of all manner of proper ways and means which may be deemed ſerviceable to that end. No Conſideration that has any weight, ſhould be omitted; nor any fit Argument or Motive left untoucht. It is neceſſary to make our Attempts upon all thoſe Principles of the human Nature, from which

Men are wont to act, especially those which are of great force and influence upon them; and to offer such Arguments and Motives as are suited to work upon each of those Principles respectively. Some Principles indeed do operate in Men more powerfully than others: But that need not hinder us from endeavouring, by proper Arguments and Motives, to work upon those which are less powerful: Since none of the Principles of Action which Men naturally have, were put into them in vain.

We know that the Affections or Principles of Hope and Fear are of vast and universal influence upon Mens Actions. Religion could not easily subsist without an appointment of Rewards and Punishments: Nor could the

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consideration of Rewards and Punishment have such force upon Men as it has, but that it is suited to operate vehemently upon two powerful Principles in them, to wit, their Hope and Fear. And hence it comes to pass, that nothing is more effectual to retain Men within the bounds of their Duty, than the prospect they have of Reward for the observation, and of Punishment for the violation of it. And this shews, that 'tis upon very good reason, that the Scriptures do chiefly apply and insist on Arguments drawn from this Topick, to engage Men to Vertue and Piety; and that Divines and Preachers have usually taken the same Method. But my Design at present is of a somewhat different nature. And because the Topick of Re-

wards and Punishments has been, and is, copiously and fully treated on by Divines: To them I shall leave it: To whose Province it seems more especially to belong.

But besides Hope and Fear, there are some other Principles within us, of which great use may be made, in order to engage us to the love and practice of Vertue. Particularly, from the natural sense we have of Honour and Shame, we may likewise draw good and forcible Motives to Vertue. And by adding the Motives we draw from them, to those which are wont to be drawn from the other Principles that are in us, we may bring our selves under a more powerful Obligation to do our Duty. This is what I propose to my self in this Discourse.

courſe. Wherein I do not go about to detract from, much leſs wholly to exclude thoſe Arguments or Motives which are fetch'd from the conſideration of Rewards and Puniſhments, or from any other juſt Topick: But leaving them upon their own bottom, am endeavouring to reinforce them with thoſe additional Arguments and Motives which reſult from the Principles that are in us of Honour and Shame. I would engage Men to Vertue and Goodneſs, by working upon their natural Principles of Self-eſteem and Ambition, and of Honour and Shame: And, therefore, doubt not but I ſhall be thought to act in concert with thoſe, who likewiſe deſign to engage Men to Vertue, by Arguments and Motives calculated to work upon Mens

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Hope or Fear, or any other of their natural Principles. And ſince Men are of various Diſpoſitions, and not only different Perſons, but even the ſame Perſons at different times, do act upon various Motives: It may be hoped that the greater variety of juſt Motives are made uſe of, the better ſucceſs may enſue; and that, if the Arguments or Motives of the one ſort do not take faſt hold of Men, thoſe of the other ſort peradventure may.

And I confeſs I found my ſelf the more willing to engage my Pen on this Subject, becauſe Generoſity is not uſually taken notice of ſo much as, perhaps, it ought, and I conceive deſerves to be. There is but little mention (for ought I can find) made of it, either in the Syſtems of Moraliſts, or the In-

Instructions of ordinary Preceptors and Tutors. And that, if I am not mistaken, is a defect necessary to be in some measure supplied: Since Generosity is a Principle extreamly useful, and of so very extensive a Nature, that it does in a sort pervade the whole Body of Morality; as I hope to shew by and by.

In the mean time, I think my self obliged to acknowledge, That I am indebted to the Learned and Ingenious Des Cartes, *for that which is indeed the Ground-work of this Essay. I have followed as exactly as I could, the lively, tho' short Description which he has given of Generosity; and some times chuse to make use of his words, not being able to find others better, or indeed so good. But whether I have improved any*

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of the Hints which he has given, or repreſented them to advantage; that I muſt ſubmit to the Judgment of others; ſince it is neither needful nor proper for me to determine in the Caſe.

The Argument it ſelf, I muſt confeſs, is great and noble; and requires a better Head and Genius than I am Maſter of, to handle it juſtly. But if I have attempted a thing above my Pitch; I am ſure I have done it with a good Intention. Nor can I, upon the Matter, blame my ſelf for the Undertaking: Since the cauſe of Vertue ſeems to demand an Attempt of this nature; and the Perſons beſt qualified have not (that I know) engaged in it ſo fully and particularly as might be wiſh'd. Upon that Account, I am perſuaded, the Sincerity of my

my intention in this Matter (which I ſteadfaſtly avow, and of which I believe there will be no reaſon to doubt) will entitle me to the Excuſe of candid People for the meanneſs of my Performance. And I allow my ſelf to hope, that as courſe as the Picture is which I preſent you with, it will ſerve to make the Original appear very Amiable.

Imprimatur,

Ra. Barker, *Reverendissimo in Christo Patri ac D^no. D^no.* Johanni *Archiepiscopo* Cant. *a Sacris.*

Feb. 15. 169$\frac{2}{3}$.

A DISCOURSE Concerning Generosity.

WE live in an Age wherein there are great pretensions made to Religion, and no less to Honour. And as these two are in themselves excellent Things, so I must confess 'tis a great satisfaction to me, that they continue to bear so general a Reputation in the World. It cannot indeed be wondred, that Things which are both excellent in their Nature, and like-

wiſe of univerſal Eſteem, ſhould be the Objects of moſt Mens aim and ambition; ſince its very natural, it ſhould be ſo. But if Men were as well agreed, what is moſt truly and properly meant by the Terms, Religion and Honour, as they are agreed, that theſe two things deſerve their Eſteem and Proſecution; we might hope for ſome viſible Improvements both in their Sentiments and Practice.

It is our misfortune, that we are too often carried away by Appearances; and calling things by wrong Names, are inſenſibly led into error, whilſt we think our ſelves altogether in the right. We apply to ſome things the characters that are due to others, and give magnificent Names to things that are, in their nature, either vitious and faulty, or at beſt but trivial and inconſiderable. Thus it ſometimes falls out, that Men call that by the name of Religion, which either is no

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Religion, or which at beſt has but little to do with it; and by the name of Honour, that which either is not ſo, or which, at beſt, ſcarce deſerves to be conſidered under that Title. Now he that has, in this manner, entertained miſtaken Notions about either Religion, on the one hand, or about Honour on the other, is neerly concerned to rectifie ſuch Miſtakes; and that, for one plain Reaſon, among others, to wit, Becauſe the abuſe of a very good thing commonly produces very ill effects.

It is not my deſign to enter into a large Diſquiſition upon the Subjects of Religion and Honour; I muſt content my ſelf to touch on them incidently, ſo far as they relate to my preſent Argument: In the proſecution whereof, I hope nevertheleſs, to make ſome advantage of the univerſal Eſteem which theſe two have juſtly obtained in the World. And ſince Generoſity has a

natural Affinity both to Religion and to Honour, I ſuppoſe a Diſcourſe upon that Subject, will be thought the more ſuitable to the Genius of the Times. But, which is of much greater Importance, it may likewiſe be hoped, that the Man of Religion will be induced to entertain the better thoughts of Honour; and on the other hand, the Man of Honour, to entertain the better thoughts of Religion, when they ſhall reſpectively conſider, that theſe two have, in themſelves, a natural Relation and Affinity to each other, at how great diſtance ſoever the opinion or practice of ſome Men may ſeem to have ſet them. For I am perſuaded, it will be no hard matter to reconcile theſe two, if we will but reſolve them into their firſt and naked Principles, and will but take the pains to ſeparate each from its abuſes and the falſe characters attributed to it: Which being the only occaſion of the

the ſeeming difference, as ſoon as thoſe are removed, that ſeeming difference will vaniſh, and the natural agreement there is between them will ſhew it ſelf. That there is really ſuch an agreement between them, will, I hope, be made out in the proceſs of this Diſcourſe; at leaſt ſo far as may be neceſſary to my preſent purpoſe; which I ſhall think ſufficient.

When I ſpeak of a conformity or agreement between Religion and Honour, it is evident I don't mean by Religion, particular modes or diſtinctions of Religion, or diſtinctions of Sects or Profeſſions, which are ſometimes call'd by that Name; nor do I mean by Honour, temporal Dignity or height of Title or Station, ancienty of Family, right of Precedence or Jurisdiction, Gentility, or any of thoſe external Gallantries that are wont to make ſuch a glare in the Eyes of the World; which are likewiſe ſome-

times called by the name of Honour. There is indeed difference enough between Religion and Honour taken reſpectively in theſe Senſes. But by Religion I mean, the Law of the rational Nature, or the complex of theſe Laws which are given by God Almighty unto Mankind for the Government of their Lives and Actions. And by Honour, I mean, That Principle reſiding in Mens minds, by which they are excited to chuſe and do thoſe things which are really worthy and becoming, and to refuſe and avoid thoſe which are really baſe and unbecoming: Which Principle, becauſe it gives Men the genuine ſtamp of Honour, is rightly called by that name. And it is between theſe two, taken reſpectively in the latter ſenſe, that I affirm there is ſuch a Conformity: I mean a Conformity between the Rule of Religion, and the Rule of Honour; and between the Principle of Religion and the Principle of Honour. If

If we look into the Compoſure of Mankind, we ſhall find that they are naturally endowed with a Principle of Self-love. And this Principle is found to be of vaſt and univerſal influence upon them, and the ſecret Spring as it were of all their Actions. Now one effect of this Principle is, That it diſpoſes Men to value themſelves for ſomething or other, and to a certain ambition or deſire of having thoſe Qualities or doing thoſe Actions which they account great and admirable. This may be called Self eſteem: And is a Principle which operates variouſly in different Perſons, according to their different Application of it, and the different Conceptions which they have of things: Inſomuch that it carries ſome Men into an infinite number of Follies, whilſt it proves to others who make the right uſe of it, a Spur to brave and worthy Actions and Deſigns: Of which more in its place.

If any Man think, that all manner of Self-esteem is vitious and condemnable; he may please to consider, that what I here call Self-esteem taken in a Philosophical sense, is a Principle which we have unavoidably, without our own Choice: It necessarily results from the general Principle of Self-love fundamentally implanted in us by Nature, and is far different from what is ordinarily called Self-conceit. Those Principles or Dispositions which we have in us by Nature, ought not, when considered only in their pure Naturals to be deemed culpable; lest thereby we obliquely accuse the Author and Lord of Nature himself. It is universally allowed by considering Men, that the Affections which are put in us by Nature, such as Love, Hate, Desire, Joy, Grief, and the like, are in themselves innocent and inculpable; and that 'tis only the excess and abuse which renders them vitious. It is

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not our Fault, that we have in us the Affections of Love or Hate, for that we have naturally and unavoidably: But our Fault is, that we Love or Hate undue Objects, or Love or Hate immoderately. So it is not our Fault that we have in us the Affection of Self-esteem; for that we have also unavoidably from Nature it self, so that 'tis impossible to erace it out of our minds: But our Fault is in misapplying this Affection, by esteeming our selves without just cause, or by doing it to excess; in which case, we fall into Pride, Self-conceit, and the like Vices, which are justly condemned by all Mankind.

Since, therefore, there is put in Man, by Nature, such an Affection or Principle of Self-esteem; and since it is of such vast influence upon his thoughts and actions, it must needs be of huge importance to regulate this Affection rightly, so that it may be applyed to just Objects

and exerted in a juſt manner: Eſpecially conſidering, that 'tis as beneficial to uſe it right, as 'tis pernicious and dangerous to abuſe or miſapply it. But we need not think, that we are under any obligation to endeavour to extirpate this Principle or Affection out of our minds, any more than we are, thoſe of Love, Deſire, Joy, Grief, Hope, Fear, and ſuch like; we are not obliged to things impoſſible: But we are under the ſtrongeſt Obligations in the World, to endeavour to correct in them whatever tends to abuſe or exceſs: And this is not only poſſible, but is indeed one of the grand buſineſſes of our Life. As for the Affection of Self-eſteem, I am perſuaded, the Vertue or Principle of Generoſity, which I am about to treat of, will be of great uſe to regulate it, and I think I may ſay, without fallacy, moſt of the other Affections too.

Now in handling the preſent Argument, I ſhall endeavour to do theſe three things.

First, To explain the Nature of Generoſity.

Secondly, To ſhew the uſefulneſs of that Principle, for the due government of our Actions.

Thirdly, To ſhew how Generoſity may be acquired, or afterwards improved in our Minds.

First, I ſhall try to ſhew the Nature of Generoſity. Now Generoſity may, in general, be conſidered under a twofold reſpect, 1. As a Paſſion or Affection in Man; and this is the more narrow and reſtrained Notion of it. And next, As a Power or Principle immediately founded in the rational Nature; and this is the more large and comprehenſive Notion of it. So far as it is attended with a Commotion in the Blood and Spirits, or with a Senſation more immediately relating to the Body, ſo far it has the

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nature of a Paſſion or Affection. And ſo far as it depends purely on the rational Nature of a Man, and is attended with ſuch Cogitations as immediately relate to the Soul, ſo far it may be conſidered as an intellectual or rational Power. Nor need we think it ſtrange, that having but one Name, it ſhould, under different reſpects, have the nature of an Affection, and likewiſe of an intellectual Power. The Names we give to things are not always adequate; and its ſcarce poſſible they ſhould be in Matters of this kind. There is ſo ſtrict an Union betwixt the Soul and Body of Man, and ſuch a reciprocal operation of the one upon the other, that ſundry of his Acts are compounded, partly of Senſations referring to the Animal Nature, and partly of Cogitations referring to the Rational. Since, therefore, thoſe Cogitations of the Soul, which either produce a Vertue in Man or accompany it, are in moſt

moſt Caſes either attended with or confirmed by ſome Perception or Affection of the Animal Nature: And ſince, on the other hand, ſome Perfections or Affections of the Animal Nature diſpoſe the Soul to certain Cogitations helpful to the producing in it the acts of ſome particular Vertues: It is eaſie to believe, there will be in the effect of this reciprocal Operation, a mixture of the Vertue and Affection; and ſo we find it falls out. Humility is a known Vertue, and Pride a known Vice; yet each of theſe are in ſome ſenſe a Paſſion or Affection, as well as upon other accounts a Vertue and a Vice. Humility, for inſtance, has the nature of a Vertue, ſo far as it is a Power or Principle referring purely to the Soul, and producing ſuch Cogitations and Actions as are commendable by the Laws of the rational Nature; but is ſtill a Paſſion or Affection, ſo far as it is accompanied with a commotion in the animal

animal Spirits, or in general with any corporeal Impreſſion. The like might be ſaid of ſeveral other Vertues; and, *mutatis mutandis*, of ſeveral Vices.

Generoſity then, conſidered as an Affection, conſiſts in a juſt Self-eſteem, whereby a Man values himſelf juſt ſo much as he lawfully and fairly may. And under this reſpect it is a Species of the general Affection, called Admiration, and holds the Medium between the two Paſſions of vitious Humility and Pride, correcting what is amiſs in each. But there are likewiſe certain other Diſpoſitions or Habitudes (worth remarking, becauſe they are of great uſe and ornament) which may be referred to Generoſity; of which ſort are, a maſculine Firmneſs and Conſtancy, Preſence of Mind and Sweetneſs of Temper. This Firmneſs and Conſtancy is of force to compoſe a Mans Spirits, to eſtabliſh his Thoughts, and to preſerve

ſerve him ſteady and conſiſtent with himſelf; and by thoſe means ſecures him, not only from many of the Livities and Imbecilities which they are apt to fall into, who are guided by impulſe and fortuitous impreſſion; but alſo, from ſeveral of thoſe errors and prepoſterous actings to which fear or feebleneſs of Spirit are wont to expoſe Men. And ſo Preſence of Mind, operates in much the ſame manner, in caſe of ſudden emergencies; and by preſerving the mind intrepid, undiſturbed, and preſent to it ſelf on ſuch occaſions, ſecures the Man from being ſurprized into things hurtful or indecent. So, likewiſe, the Sweetneſs of Temper which accompanies Generoſity, ſerves to render Men pacifick, agreeable and eaſie to themſelves and others. And as it tends to overcome the humorous and ſour Qualities which make Men uneaſie to themſelves, and diſagreeable in Converſation; ſo it like-

likewiſe diſpoſes them to all the decent Expreſſions imaginable of Civility and Complaiſance.

It is true, the ſeveral Diſpoſitions aforeſaid may be many times owing to Mens natural Temperament. But yet, if Men have them not by the gift of Nature, 'tis in great meaſure within their power to acquire them, or to cultivate and improve them when acquired; and to correct the contrary Qualities. Some Men indeed have the happineſs to be naturally of an ingenuous Diſpoſition, Candid, Sincere, Modeſt, and of a firm and maſculine Temper; having, by the particular vouchſafement of God Almighty, a lovelineſs and ſweetneſs of Spirit which cannot be expreſs'd, and ſuch a Command over their Spirits as is of extraordinary advantage to them. They who have theſe and the like Qualities implanted in them by Nature, are in a ſort born to Generoſity. And

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even they who have them in a lower degree, are altogether unexcuſable if they do not endeavour to cheriſh and improve them, ſince the acquiſition of Generoſity would be ſo eaſie, where there is ſuch a natural aptitude for it. On the contrary, ſome Men are particularly unhappy in their compoſure, being naturally of a rough and feral Temper, dark and ſolitary in their Minds, ſtubborn, haughty, or of feeble and impotent Spirits. He who is concerned in any of theſe or ſuch like ill Qualities (for one cannot with a good Grace ſuppoſe them all in one Man) is, its true, under peculiar difficulties as to the acquiring of Generoſity. But as that ought to quicken his diligence and care to overcome thoſe Impediments which his natural Temper puts him under, ſo if he does overcome them, his Conqueſt will be the more glorious: But I am not to inſiſt upon that in this place. But

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from the different Diſpoſitions of People, we may obſerve in what manner Generoſity reſides in Mens Tempers, and how it mixes it ſelf with their other Affections and Diſpoſitions. And this, I think, does partly tend to ſhew the Nature of it; which is what we have been conſidering.

But ſince my deſign is, to conſider Generoſity, not barely as it falls under the notion of a Paſſion or Affection; but principally, as it is a Vertue or intellectual Power inherent in the Mind, under which reſpect it is of the greateſt uſe: I muſt now advance a little further. Now if Generoſity be (as I hope to ſhew that it is) an intellectual Power of the Soul, helpful for the good government of a Mans Paſſions, corporeal Impreſſions and Appetites, and diſpoſing him to proſecute that which is abſolutely beſt (which is the character and deſcription of Vertue) then we ſhall be obliged,

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in reaſon, to acknowledge it to be a Vertue. And if, moreover, it be (as indeed it is) ſuch an intellectual Power of the Soul, as ſerves to produce in Men the habit and practice of ſeveral particular Vertues; then it will rather fall under the notion of a general Principle of Vertue, than of a particular Vertue. And as ſuch, chiefly, I mean now to conſider it; not ſingly as a particular Vertue, but in a larger extent, as 'tis a general Principle of the rational Nature, and the fruitful Parent of many particular Vertues.

But before I proceed further upon this Matter, it will, I conceive, be proper to premiſe a few ſummary Conſiderations, for clearing the way to what follows. It is acknowledged by all Men, who are in their right Mind, That there is an eſſential difference between Good and Evil; a difference founded in the nature of things, ſo that ſome things

things are eſſentially Good, and others eſſentially Evil: That what is Good, is Eligible, Honourable and becoming Mans Nature, and tends to advance and perfect it: And on the contrary, that what is Evil, is to be refuſed and avoided, is diſhonourable and misbecoming, and tends to a Man's Shame, Reproach and Miſery. That what is Good, naturally imports in it the character of Honourable, that is, challenges and deſerves Honour; and the doing of it, cannot be matter of juſt ſhame or diſgrace to a Man: And on the contrary, that what is Evil, naturally imports in it the character of Diſhonourable, and the doing of it, cannot be matter of juſt praiſe or ornament to a Man. And that Mankind are endued with Notions correſponding to the nature of things in this caſe; and have, by the Principles inherent in their minds, an ability of diſcerning, in ſome meaſure, what

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is Good and what Evil, what is Honourable and Becoming, and what is Diſhonourable and Unbecoming. Theſe things are clear in themſelves; and they are likewiſe confirmed to us by the univerſal conſent of wiſe Men, who have, in all Ages, eſteemed ſome things Good, and others Evil: The former they have accounted Great, Worthy and Honourable; the latter, Baſe, Raſcally and Diſhonourable. Hence they have called Vertue, an ὁμοίωμα τῦ θεῦ, τὸ δίκαιον, τὸ ἰσῦν, τὸ πρέπον, τὸ καλὸν, τὸ θεῖον, that is, a Reſemblance or Conformity to God, that which is Fit, Equitable, Becoming, Beautiful, Divine, and the like; giving the contrary Appellations to Vice. Hence they always deemed the former worthy of Eſteem, Veneration and Reward; and the latter, worthy of Shame, Contempt and Puniſhment. And hence ſuch Perſons as have been endowed with extraordinary

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Qualifications, and have done great and worthy things, have been in all Ages thought to deserve Esteem and Honour: But on the contrary, such as have been vitious and depraved in their Minds, or guilty of base and infamous Actions, have been thought to deserve Shame and Ignominy. And upon such Principles as these, is founded the very notion of Merit, which implies in it, as well the suitableness and congruity there is, that such as have brave Spirits, and perform brave and worthy things, should be honoured and esteemed, as likewise the right and title they have to such Honour and Esteem, as the just reward of their Vertue. And hence all wise Lawgivers have thought it both necessary and just, to appoint Honours and Rewards for vertuous and heroical Actions; and Shame and Punishments for vitious and infamous ones. The foregoing Considerations amount to this,

this, That nothing can be truly and intrinsically Honourable, but what is according to Vertue: That what is according to Vertue, is truly and intrinsically Honourable: That Praise and Honour are by a natural and indelible Right due to true Merit; and true Merit is founded only in true Vertue and Goodness. Thus it may be seen, what is most truly honourable and conducing to our Happiness, and the Perfection of our Nature. And in regard we have in us, by Nature, a vehement desire of Happiness and Perfection, it highly concerns us to make use of that Principle for the purposes which God Almighty appears to have designed in his implanting it in us; that so we do not abuse or pervert a Principle which is given us for excellent ends, and which is of mighty influence upon our Minds and Actions, and put upon our selves the fatal Cheat of pursuing an imaginary

nary Good, and an imaginary Felicity, instead of that which is real and solid: But on the contrary, being made sensible in what our true Honour and Happiness consist, we may prosecute that with our utmost intention and diligence. And how serviceable the Principle of Generosity may be to us in that good Design, may be worth our while to enquire.

Now I come to speak of Generosity, as it is founded in, or more immediately relates to the rational Nature. And under this Notion it may, in like manner as before, be considered, first, with respect to the Principle of Self-esteem, and then with respect to those other Qualifications or Powers of the rational Nature, which it either produces or is wont to be attended withal. So that being now to discourse of it as an intellectual Principle, I must be allowed to take it in a fuller Latitude than I have yet done,

done, or could properly do when I consider'd it barely as a Passion or Affection. And after I have spoken something concerning the Principle of Self-esteem, I shall endeavour to shew, how Generosity is suited to regulate and conduct it rightly, and then shall take notice of some particular Vertues which belong, or may be referred to the character of Generosity.

Tho' the Principle of Self-esteem be common to all Men, being implanted in them by Nature, yet it is found to operate diversly in different Persons, and even in the same Person at different times. Being of a very lively and moving Nature, it will exert it self one way or other, either for better or worse. If it be not made an Instrument to Vertue, it will prove an Instrument to Vice; and for want of being rightly managed and conducted, will carry Men into those Extreams which are vitious and

culpable. Thus it has very different Effects, according as Men uſe it rightly or amiſs. As, when a Man reflecting inwardly upon himſelf, ſuffers the Self-eſteem that is in him to work upon falſe grounds or to exceed its juſt limits, and either imagines that he has in him thoſe good Qualities which he really has not, or ſwells beyond due bounds thoſe good Qualities which are really in him; and thereupon ſets a higher value upon himſelf than in Juſtice and Reaſon he ought; or unjuſtly prefers himſelf before other Men: Then that Self-eſteem which was in its pure Naturals an innocent Affection, degenerates into Pride, and becomes juſtly blameable. And on the other hand, when a Man reflecting upon himſelf, from the contemplation he has of his own Imbecillities, and of his inability to conduct his Paſſions and Actions aright, is depreſſed in his Thoughts for want of firm-

firmneſs and ſteadineſs of Mind, aggravates his own Imperfections, and depretiates what is really commendable in him; and thereupon ſets a lower value upon himſelf, at leaſt while this Paſſion continues, than in reaſon he ought: Then his Self-eſteem (if one may here ſo call it) degenerates into vitious Humility or Abjectneſs; which is likewiſe blameable. But in oppoſition to both theſe, when upon the Reflection a Man makes on himſelf, he ſets ſuch a value upon himſelf as is no more or leſs than what is juſt and warrantable, and poiſes his Mind between the extreams of Pride and Abjectneſs; then his Self-eſteem is rightly tempered and conducted, and the Man is led to that Temper of Mind which is the character of Generoſity.

It will be readily acknowledged, that 'tis much more frequent for Men to err by eſteeming themſelves over-much, than by ſinking their

own value. For though Self-contempt, as well as Pride, proceeds from the operation of Self love, the former being compounded of Self-love, Admiration and Grief, for the defects which a Man finds or ſuppoſes to be in him; as the latter is compounded of Self love, Admiration and Joy, for the Excellencies he finds or ſuppoſes to be in him: Yet the Self-love that is in Men, does, as it falls out, more eaſily and readily produce Self-eſteem than Self contempt. There is a ſtronger Byaſs on that ſide than on the other. And therefore 'tis no wonder that Pride, which is a kind of Self-eſteem, to wit, a wrongful or exceſſive one, ſhould be a more common Error than vitious Humility which is a kind of Self-contempt. Nor will it ſeem ſtrange, that Pride ſhould be the more growing and thriving Vice of the two, if it be conſider'd, that the Self-love that is in Men has not only

only the greater Byaſs towards Pride, but likewiſe operates more vehemently that way; which may eaſily occaſion that Vice to ſpread further, and run more into the extream: As when a thing is moving, the ſtronger its Motion is, the further it is like to run beyond the Lines. Upon which account, it ſeems neceſſary, for Men to guard themſelves with the greater care and caution on that ſide where there is the greater danger. But ſince I am not adviſing any Body, either to overrate himſelf for fear of falling into a vitious Humility, or to underrate himſelf for fear of falling into Pride; but am endeavouring to point at a Method for avoiding both thoſe extreams: I ſhall think it ſufficient for my preſent purpoſe to obſerve, That both thoſe Extreams are condemnable; and that Generoſity is a Remedy againſt both.

But in the mean time, is it really a diſadvantage and ſnare to us, that we are naturally more diſpoſed to Eſteem than Diſeſteem our ſelves? Or, may not that natural Diſpoſition be ſo tempered and applyed as to be of great advantage to us? If it be a diſadvantage and ſnare to us, it becomes ſo through our own fault; and if it be not made uſe of to our greater advantage and benefit, it will likewiſe be our own fault. The diſpoſition to eſteem our ſelves, is ſtrong and weighing; but what is its natural tendency and uſe? Is it the natural uſe of it, to encline us to eſteem our ſelves upon falſe or frivolous Grounds, or to eſteem our ſelves beyond the juſt meaſure? Is the natural uſe of it to lead us to Pride, and the numerous train of hateful and black qualities that are wont to accompany it? Certainly it cannot be. Theſe are Faults which proceed from the groſs abuſe of this diſpoſi-

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tion, and therefore cannot be the natural uſe of it. Or is it deſigned only to give us the fantaſtick pleaſure of Self-applauſe? Sure this is too low and mean a Deſign for a Principle of ſo great and univerſal influence as this is upon our thoughts and actions. On the contrary, without doubt the natural uſe and deſign of it is, To beget in Men an emulation and ambition for Vertue, to eſtabliſh and compoſe their Minds; and in a word, to incite them to worthy and becoming things, and deter them from the contrary. If Men were void of all Self-eſteem, they could not be touch'd with the ſenſe either of Honour or Shame. Theſe would take no hold of them, ſince they are founded upon the eſteem which Men have of themſelves, and cannot ſubſiſt without it. Now the impreſſions of Honour and Shame are found to lay a great Reſtraint upon Mankind; and ſometimes work

upon them, when other Conſiderations prove ineffectual. But if Men were deſtitute of all Self-eſteem, they would be looſe from this Reſtraint; which I think 'tis clear would be a great diſadvantage to them: And therefore ſure 'tis an advantage to them to have ſuch a Principle. So likewiſe, ſince Men are ſo naturally diſpoſed to eſteem themſelves; that both may and ought to be an Argument to them, to undertake and do thoſe things only which are really Praiſe-worthy. Seeing they love and are willing to have eſteem; that is a proper Motive to them to do thoſe things which may deſerve and procure it. But the Self-eſteem that is in Men, is alſo of uſe, as it ſerves to compoſe and eſtabliſh their Minds. It brings with it a calm and ſerenity into the Mind, and puts it, as one may ſay, into a good Humour. It produces in Men ſuch Sentiments as give them a ſteadineſs

dineſs and aſſurance of Mind, and ſecure them from the diſorder and embaraſs which the Affection of Self-contempt is wont to be attended with. And it is likewiſe of great force to animate and enliven the Mind, and to diſpoſe Men to action and effort. For being in its operation, mixed with a kind of Joy and Complacency, the ſenſations that are thereby produced in the Man, ſerve to open his thoughts, and to diſpoſe him to a lively and active temper of Mind: Which is of conſiderable uſe. Whereas on the other hand, the Affection of Self-deſpect tends to deaden and diſcompoſe the Mind; and being in its operation mixed with the ſluggiſh and melancholy Paſſion of Grief (as I before obſerved) brings upon the Mind ſuch a Languor as is oftentimes very prejudicial. So that ſeems in it ſelf rather beneficial it than hurtful to Mankind, that they have ſuch a natu-

ral Byaſs and Diſpoſition to Self-eſteem.

But you will ſay, this Self-eſteem is apt to exceed its juſt bounds, and to betray Men into Pride and an extravagant conceit of themſelves. But is it therefore in it ſelf culpable? If it be miſchievous in its Abuſe, may it not be advantagious in its right and regular uſe? If it produce this effect in us, it does not (as I have already ſaid) do this naturally and unavoidably, but by accident and by our own Fault. There are ſeveral Principles or Propenſities that belong to our Nature, which will certainly run into extreams if they be not ballanced and rightly managed; eſpecially thoſe which are, as this is, vehement and of powerful influence upon us. And if we are not wont to think that they are in themſelves culpable and unmanageable, why ſhould we think this to be ſo? Let us turn our Eyes but to a few Inſtances.

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Every Body knows we have in us a Principle of Self-preſervation: Which is indeed both innocent in it ſelf, and alſo of great and neceſſary uſe. But this is likewiſe apt to exceed its juſt bounds. If Men ſhould give it a loſe Rein and follow without reſerve its blind Dictates, it would in all probability throw them into ſuch an exceſs of Fear and Solicitude for themſelves, as would render them uſeleſs to their Friends or their Country, as would diſable them to purſue the Rules of Juſtice, Charity, Fortitude and all other Vertues, the practice whereof may be attended with danger and hazard, and would perhaps ſometimes deſtroy the very end for which this Principle ſeems deſigned, as it befalls them, who hurl themſelves into Danger or Death, through exceſſive Fear of it and Solicitude to avoid it. There is alſo in Men a vehement deſire of Procreation.

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And that Propenſity is innocent in it ſelf, and both may and ought to be ſo governed, as to anſwer its end without exceeding the juſt bounds. Yet ſhould Men let themſelves looſe to follow its impulſe without fear or wit, no doubt but it would carry them into the laſt Extravagancies. So likewiſe the innate deſire of Happineſs that is in Men, is capable of being directed rightly; and we ought to make uſe of it, as may be ſubſervient to the end for which it was given us. But Men may miſapply it; and when they do ſo, it will, by the prevailing influence it has upon them, carry them far into the Extream, and inſpire them with as great a Fervency in the proſecution of a falſe or imaginary Good, as of the real and true One. In ſhort, theſe and other vehement and operative Principles or Propenſities are given Men for wiſe and good Purpoſes; ſome of which

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we are able eaſily to diſcover, and if they be rightly managed will be of great uſe. But if we do not endeavour to conduct them by our Reaſon and the Laws which God hath given us for that purpoſe, the blame will juſtly fall upon our own ſelves. It will not therefore, I conceive, either turn to ſo good account, or ſo well become us, to bequarrel and find fault with our own Nature and Compoſure, as it will, to endeavour all we can to attemper and conduct the Principles and Propenſities that are in us, by the Laws of Reaſon and Revelation. But I am now concerned only with the Principle of Self eſteem, and therefore ſhall proceed to conſider, how it is mixed with Generoſity, and conducted by it.

Whoſo exactly obſerves the Nature of Mankind, will find, that there is nothing which can ſo properly and abſolutely be called a Man's own, as the free diſpoſal of his

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own Will: And that generally ſpeaking, a Man cannot juſtly be either praiſed or diſpraiſed, but for thoſe Actions which depend on this freedom of his Nature: becauſe he has nothing elſe ſo entirely in his own power. Now agreeably hereto, the Character of a Generous Man will be ſuch as follows:

The Generous Man finds in himſelf a Reſolution to uſe that Freedom of his Will rightly, and thereupon is always enclined to undertake and execute what he ſhall judge beſt and moſt fitting to be done. And then, he values himſelf upon nothing ſo much as upon the ſincere uſe of his Natural Freedom, and the firm purpoſes he makes to proſecute Vertue with an extream application. He does not value himſelf upon account of any of thoſe things which are wont to beget Pride in Men, ſuch as Honours, Riches, Wit, Beauty, Succeſs,

ceſs, or the like: but upon account of that, which no Man can, properly ſpeaking, be proud of, becauſe it is not an Excellency peculiar to himſelf above other Men, but a Property of the Human Nature in general, to wit, The Free Diſpoſal of his own Will. And by this means he is ſecured from Pride. On the other hand, he is very ſenſible of the Failings and Imperfections incident to Human Nature, by reaſon whereof he knows himſelf to be liable to thoſe Errours and Offences which he ſees in other Men. And he conſiders at the ſame time, that other Men, as having the free diſpoſal of their own Wills, as well as himſelf has of his, may uſe that freedom as well as himſelf does or better, if they be not themſelves in fault. And therefore he is not enclined to entertain big thoughts of himſelf, or to prefer himſelf before other Men. And this preſerves him in

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an humble and modeſt temper of Mind. But in regard he finds in himſelf (as I have ſaid) a ſteady Purpoſe of uſing his Natural Freedom rightly, and of doing always, as near as he can, that which is really and abſolutely beſt, which he thinks is the main thing that gives Men a real value or worth: He is ſatisfied, that he ought not to be contemned though he want ſeveral of thoſe External Conſiderations for which Men are generally valued in the World, ſuch as Honours, Wealth, Beauty, or the like. Nor does he much care if he be contemned for the want of them. Much leſs is he concerned, if he fortune to be diſvalued for a defect in ſome of thoſe trivial things, which in the opinion of ſome People paſs for Recommendations of a Man; ſuch as Garb, Air, Mien, Accent, or the like. And thus he is placed above the reach of Contempt, and ſecured from a vicious Humility or ab-

abjectneſs of Spirit. And when he ſurveys, (according to the beſt of his skill, be it greater or leſs) both the Human Nature in general, and Himſelf in particular, he becomes ſenſible, that he has no abſolute need of any thing which it is not in his own power, by the help of God, to acquire and keep. And therefore he is not much diſquieted, though he want ſeveral of the Ornaments and Accommodations of Life which others have. Thus, if he have not thoſe External Things which Men are ordinarily valued for, he does not upon that account think himſelf much inferiour to thoſe that have them: And if he have, he does not think himſelf ſuperiour upon that account, to thoſe that have them not. He has a low value for External things; and is perſwaded, that the poſſeſſion of them cannot juſtly advance, or the want of them juſtly ſink a Man's real Price. And therefore in eſtimating either him-

himſelf or others, he is ſatisfied, that theſe or any other things extrinſical to a Man, or which depend on the circumſtances of Mens Life and Fortunes, or for which they muſt be entirely beholden to other Men, ought not to be brought to account. And by ſuch Conſiderations as theſe he regulates the Self-eſteem that is in him, and makes uſe of it for good purpoſes.

He is likewiſe perſuaded it would be againſt the Rules of Juſtice, to value another Man either beneath or above what we know to be his juſt Deſert; and that for the ſame Reaſons it would be againſt Juſtice to do ſo by himſelf. And this is another Conſideration by which he regulates the Self-eſteem that is in him, and comes to think of himſelf as near as he can, neither more nor leſs than he lawfully and fairly may. But as he is careful not to undertake another, through Envy, Hatred or other ſiniſter

niſter Motive; ſo he is likewiſe careful not to over-value himſelf, out of Partiality and Self-love: But in the judgment he paſſes either on himſelf or others, endeavours to make all thoſe allowances which Reaſon and Juſtice require. And tho' he does not take any more delight than other Men in the Contemplation of himſelf, and is reſolved to make no other uſe of that Self eſteem which he has in him, than only to eſtabliſh his Mind, and excite him to the more vigorous proſecution of that which is Beſt and moſt Honourable; yet when a neceſſary or juſt occaſion is offered for his paſſing a judgment upon himſelf in this nature, then he falls into ſuch cogitations as carry him even between Pride and Abjectneſs, and ſecure him from the Errors of both.

Agreeably hereunto, from the conſideration of the Dignity of the rational Nature, and of the Obligations

gations that arise from thence to act suitably to that Character, the generous Man finds himself obliged to make a firm and constant Resolution, not to do any thing that is dishonourable or unbecoming. The just apprehensions he has touching his own Nature, restrain him from doing those things which are, in the concurrent judgment of wise Men, base and ignominious; and excite him to whatever is excellent and praise-worthy. When he considers the character which Mankind bear in the Creation, how that they are placed in a middle rank between the Angelical and the Brutal Nature: This suggests to him, that it is unbecoming and beneath him, to sink himself to a conformity with the latter; and that 'tis no less worthy of his care and ambition, to aspire after a similitude to the former (as far as may consist with the impotency of his Nature) by a just observation of those

thoſe Laws which the ſupream Creator has given the rational World to govern themſelves by. And therefore he thinks, 'tis for his Credit and Honour to do thoſe things which tend to advance his Nature, as on the t'other hand 'tis a ſhame and diſgrace to him, to do thoſe things which tend to debaſe it. But though he have in his Breaſt an extream ſenſe of Honour, yet that does not operate within him as a fantaſtical airy Principle, but as a Spur to vertuous and worthy Actions: For he is far from the empty humour of Popularity or Vain-glory, and places true Honour, not in the little niceties or punctilio's of pretended Reputation and Gallantry, but in thoſe things which will recommend him to God and good Men, and which import a real and ſolid Worth. And when (to carry this Conſideration a little further) he calls to mind the Relation he ſtands in un-

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to God Almighty himſelf, whoſe Image and Offspring he, in ſome ſenſe, is, this lets him ſee that he is under the ſtrongeſt Obligations in the World, of Duty, Reaſon and Honour, to do thoſe things which are Vertuous and Becoming, and to avoid the contrary. And, whereas, by this Contemplation of the human Nature, and of the Powers and Endowments which it hath pleaſed God to beſtow on it, he is made ſenſible that Vertue is a thing practicable and within his Power: This arms him againſt the ſuggeſtions of thoſe who would diſcourage him from attempting the proſecution of Vertue and Felicity, under pretence that they are things placed out of his reach: And on the other ſide, engages him to exert his utmoſt endeavours to attain as great a Perfection in Vertue as he can; ſince he ſees no reaſon to deſpair of an Improvement correſponding to his Endeavours. He is

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perſuaded it is in his power to become Vertuous and Happy; and that if he be not ſuch, 'twill be his own Fault. This excites his Reſolution and animates his Endeavours, and makes him with Courage and in good Earneſt ſet about that arduous Affair, in which he has ſo good aſſurance of an anſwerable Succeſs. Thus Generoſity helps Men to eſtimate themſelves and others rightly, and inſpires them with ſuch Sentiments and Reſolutions, as ſerve both to diſpoſe them to Vertue, and likewiſe to render them vigorous in their endeavours to improve in that Character.

Now if any Man ſhould at firſt be apt to think, that Generoſity leads Men to Pride, he may, I believe, without much difficulty, ſee that there is no ſuch matter, if he will but conſider well what Pride is. Now Pride, taken abſolutely or with reſpect to a Man's own ſelf, conſiſts in an unjuſt or exceſſive

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Opinion or Eſteem of one's ſelf. Unjuſt, when a Man either values himſelf for ſomething that he really has not; which is the worſt ſort of Pride, and the moſt groſs and unreaſonable: Or elſe for ſomething, which properly ſpeaking, has not in it ſelf any real Worth, and ſo cannot communicate any to its poſſeſſor. Exceſſive, when he values himſelf more than he ought, for ſomething laudable, which he has really in ſome meaſure in him. But the Generous Man does not do either of theſe. It is his Character, that he values himſelf juſt ſo much as he ought; neither more nor leſs than he lawfully and fairly may. Now it is repugnant for a Man to value himſelf juſtly or exactly, and at the ſame time to value himſelf wrongfully or exceſſively. That is to be Proud, and not to be Proud, both at once. On the contrary, if we look exactly into the thing, we may diſcern, that

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Generoſity produces the true and regular Humility, and ſuch a one as is perhaps both leſs artificial, and better grounded than any other. Thus Generous People are commonly found by experience, more addicted to Humility and Modeſty, and the Ungenerous to Pride and Inſolence. So alſo Pride, taken relatively, or with reſpect to others, is an unjuſt preferring our ſelves before other Men; when we falſly think we excel other Men. But the Generous Man is perhaps leſs inclined than others, to prefer himſelf. If he has an aſteem for himſelf, he has ſo likewiſe, and that upon the ſame Reaſons, for the Human Nature in general. If he eſteems himſelf for the Reſolutions he makes to uſe his Natural Freedom rightly, he eſteems other Men equally upon that account. And if another Man be more punctual in keeping his Reſolutions of that kind than himſelf is, he finds

no difficulty to give him the pre-
ference. But in regard he does not
eſteem himſelf for any thing which
is not common to other Men equal
ly with himſelf; he is the leſs liable
to be proud: Since Pride is ground-
ed upon a conceit, that we have
in us ſomething Excellent, which is
not to be found in the generality
of other Men. Men are not wont
to be Proud, (I might ſay, cannot
be ſo) for their having ſomewhat
which every body elſe both has as
well as they, and may, if he will,
uſe as well as they do. One may
be Proud, becauſe he either ſurpaſ-
ſes other Men in Underſtanding,
Strength, Beauty, or the like; or
imagins that he doth ſo: But I ne-
ver heard of any Body in his Sen-
ſes that was Proud, becauſe Man-
kind at large, are rational and in-
telligent Creatures, or becauſe they
are of a comely and beautiful Fi-
gure, or upon the account of thoſe
Qualities which are common to the
whole

whole Species. If Pride be a kind of Self-eſteem (as doubtleſs it is) it cannot take place in theſe Caſes, which do not relate to our ſelves only, but to Mankind in general. And to do right to the generous Man I muſt obſerve, that he does not deſire to compare himſelf with thoſe who may perhaps come ſhort of him, in order to prefer himſelf before them, or gain a reputation from their Defects. But he rather chuſes to compare himſelf with thoſe who excel him, to the end he may be thereby excited to an emulation of their Vertue, and to a deſire of equalling or exceeding them if he can, in that which is Vertuous and Praiſe-worthy. In a word, if the generous Man endeavours to value both the Human Nature in general, and himſelf in particular, juſt ſo much as he lawfully may, and no more, then he cannot reaſonably be thought more, but indeed much leſs liable to Pride than other Men.

They indeed who are desirous to fasten upon the Generous Man the imputation of Pride, upon any Terms, may perhaps carry the Charge a little further, and pretend, that if he be not Proud with respect to Men, by preferring himself unjustly before them, yet he is Proud and Assuming with respect to God Almighty, by arrogating to himself such a freedom of Action, and such a Power of chusing and doing Good, as they imagine does detract from the divine Grace and Concurrence. But I desire it may be considered, that the Generous Man does not assume to himself this natural Freedom and Choice, in opposition to the divine influence and concurrence, but in opposition to a necessity of acting. There is no Man more willing than he, to acknowledge, both the dependance which Mankind have on the divine Being; and likewise, that whatever Powers or good

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Qualifications they have, they receive the ſame from God Almighty, from whom, as the Scripture teſtifies, and all conſidering Men acknowledge, even upon the foot of natural Theology, "Every good Gift cometh. But as he is ſatisfied, that both the Beginnings and Increaſes of Vertue and Goodneſs in Men, are from God Almighty: So he is alſo ſatisfied, from his own and the experience of all other Men, that Mankind are free Agents, and are obliged by the Laws of God and Man, to uſe that Freedom rightly. And therefore he does not think himſelf much concerned to determine (as ſome Men venture to do) in what particular manner God is pleaſed to communicate Vertues and good Qualities unto Men; or how, in particular, the divine Aids work with or upon that natural Freedom which we have, either antecedently or concomitantly, or any, or what other way;

or how in particular the Divine Concurrence and our natural Freedom consist together. He thinks these are things, in a great measure out of his reach: And that as he cannot expect to acquire an entire Certainty about them; so he may be as good a Man without the certain knowledge of them, as with it. But being on the own hand assured, that God Almighty is the primary Author of all good, he thinks, Men are obliged to depend on the Divine Majesty, and to ascribe to him the Beginnings and Increases of Vertue and Goodness in them: And being on the other hand assured, that Mankind are free Agents, he sees no reason to doubt, but that they can and ought to use that Freedom rightly, and that that is the way for them to become Vertuous and good Men.

To this I may add, that the current Notions which Men have in cases of this Nature about Self-esteem,

ſteem; and about Pride and Humility, agree very well with what I have before ſpoken touching the Sentiments which accompany Generoſity. We are not wont to blame Men, or account them Proud (nor can we indeed juſtly ſo do) for reſolving (which in the mean time ſuppoſes Freedom and Choice) to become as Vertuous and Good as they poſſibly can; or for believing, that their Reſolution and Endeavour to be ſuch, is a proper and conducive means to that end: For thinking it beneath them, to revenge an Affront or Injury; or to commit a vile and ignominious thing: For having an ambition for that which is Vertuous, Decent and Venerable, and an abhorrence of the contrary, or the like. Theſe we eſteem laudable Principles and according to Vertue. And are wont to make uſe of the innate emulation and deſire of Glory, which we find in our ſelves or o-

thers, in order to excite our ſelves or them to things of a worthy and becoming Nature. And on the other ſide, we cannot reaſonably, and, I think, uſually do not, eſteem it a Part or Inſtance of true Humility, for Men to diſparage and degrade the human Nature without grounds: To repreſent Mankind as a company of neceſſary Agents, or of Beings either not at all Superiour to Brutes, or (which will render them much worſe than Brutes) void of all Goodneſs. Humility does not require that which is againſt Juſtice or Truth. So alſo we do not count it an inſtance of true Humility, that a Man can deſcend to the vileſt Actions, and thinks nothing unbecoming or beneath him. But we rather, and no doubt very deſervedly, eſteem him to be in a profligate State, who has no regard to his Reputation or Honour.

But further, as to thoſe Vertues or good Diſpoſitions of the Mind which

which belong to Generoſity, and by the Method before propoſed, come to be conſider'd next: I ſhall touch upon ſome of them now, and ſhall by and by have occaſion to ſpeak of ſome others, when I come to give a further Interpretation of this Principle, by ſhewing the Affinity and Connexion there is between it and ſeveral other Vertues of conſiderable Note. Now Generoſity does in general draw to it all thoſe Vertues which beſpeak a Manly temper of Mind, and produce a tenour of Action becoming the human Nature; which Vertues I ſhall not go about exactly to enumerate: But there are ſome which I muſt not omit naming particularly, becauſe they ſeem to have a nearer cognation to it than ordinary. Of this ſort are, Firmneſs of Mind, Goodneſs and Ingenuity of Temper, Liberality in diſtributing Favours, Sincerity and Rectitude of Spirit, Diſpaſſionateneſs or

Tranquility, Evenneſs of Temper and Judgment, exact Obſervation of Decorum; in a word, an extream Love and Veneration for Vertue.

Wherein this Firmneſs of Mind principally conſiſts, may perhaps be moſt commodiouſly ſeen by conſidering the Qualities oppoſite to it. Now Firmneſs of Mind is oppoſed to that impotency of Spirit which lays Men open to the *incurſions* of Fear and Affrightment; by which their Reaſon is ſometimes rendred uſeleſs to them, and the Men ſubjected to the Torment, Perplexities, and other innumerable ill effects of that extravagant Paſſion. It is oppoſed to that ſoftneſs or vitious Modeſty, which enclines Men to comply with others in things evil and diſhonourable (ſometimes even againſt their own Judgment) only to avoid their Confrontments or Reproaches. It is alſo oppoſed to another kind of impotency of Spirit,

rit, whereby a Man for want of Judgment and of Resolution to use his natural Freedom rightly, is either held from acting, by continual fluctuation of Mind, or can never keep a consistency with himself in the course of his Actions, but is oftentimes enclined to do and actually does those things, of which he knows at the same time he shall afterwards have cause to Repent. It is also opposed to that sort of impotency of Spirit, which keeps Men servilely under the power of Custom and Prepossession; and renders them unable to quit those Errors which are fixt in them by Custom, Education, or the power of fancy and corporeal Impression, though upon the cleareſt Reasons and fullest Conviction that can be. There are some People, who are very unhappy in this particular. They are oftentimes guided by Fancy and Humour; by the cogitations which are raised in them by

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their Paſſions or corporeal Impreſſions, which though never ſo ſlight and trivial, they have accuſtomed themſelves to attend unto; not conſidering ſo much, whether they have any ſolid reaſon for what they do reſolve to do, as whether their Humour, Fancy or Prepoſſeſſion encline them to do it: And not diſtinguiſhing theImpreſſions that are made upon them by external things, or by their own Imagination, and the Perceptions which are by theſe means excited in their Brain and Spirits, from the Principles of the rational Nature, or the Cogitations that purely relate to the Soul, ſuffer themſelves to be carried away by uncertain and fortuitousImpreſſions, in ſo much that they act as it were by chance, without being able in many things, to give a tolerable reaſon for what they do. This habit betokens a great Infirmity: And as it is moſt incident to Women and People of effeminate and feeble

feeble Spirits, ſo it is directly oppoſite to Generoſity. It is oppoſed alſo, to another kind of Impotency of Spirit, whereby Men are unable to demean themſelves ſteadily and evenly in the two different ſtates of Life: But are either tranſported to an exceſs of Levity and Folly by Proſperity, or confounded and diſpirited by the acceſs of Adverſity. It is alſo oppoſed to that ſort of Impotency of Spirit, which diſcovers it ſelf by Trepidity upon the approach of Danger, bya dulneſs and drowſineſs ofMind, and by an averſion to undertake or go through thoſe Poſts and Employments which are attended with labour and hazard. Theſe and ſuch like are the Qualities oppoſite to it. So that if we turn the Tables, we ſhall eaſily ſee wherein this firmneſs of Mind conſiſts: To wit, in Courage and Conſtancy, in a judicious Uniformity of acting, in the preſidence of Reaſon over our Prejudi-

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ces and corporeal Impreſſions, in a conſtancy and evenneſs under every State of Life, in a diſcreet boldneſs and activity. And ſince theſe Qualities which I have mentioned as oppoſite to firmneſs of Mind, diſcover an imbecillity of Spirit, and diſpoſe Men to act upon childiſh and weak Principles; the contrary Qualities may, not improperly, be thought to belong to the Character of Generoſity.

The goodneſs and ingenuouſneſs of Temper which I juſt now mentioned, conſiſts in that Candor and Humanity which renders Men peaceable, agreeable and well humoured, willing to paſs by Injuries upon reaſonable Terms, and to put the moſt favourable conſtruction that may fairly be upon things; which fills Men with ſentiments of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, and of Clemency and Mercy; which makes them obliging and civil in Converſation; and enclines them

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to render not only unto their Friends and Neighbours, but likewiſe to Strangers and others, as occaſion may be, the reſpective offices of Curteſy and Good-will, and to do all that lies in their power to preſerve and maintain amity and good underſtanding with thoſe with whom they converſe. For the Generous Man has an eſteem for the human Nature in general; and therefore thinks, that all Men are entituled to thoſe reſpects and good Offices which identity of Blood and Nature challenge from him. He remembers likewiſe the imbecillities that belong to human Nature; that no Man is wiſe at all times; that there are a great many accidents and emerging Circumſtances which lead Men inſenſibly into Error, inſomuch that the moſt vigilant and cautious are ſometime or other deceived and intrapped: And therefore he is not apt to be ſevere in his Cenſures, or to condemn

demn Men of improbity or insincerity for a single unadvised Action. The knowledge he has of his own Infirmity, restrains him in that particular, and makes him willing to give other Mens Actions that connivance or favourable Construction which he himself may desire or stand in need of for his own. And when he considers, that other Men, as well as himself, have by Nature the free disposal of their own Wills, he is disposed to believe, that they resolve as well as himself does, to use that power rightly, and thereupon that the Errors or Faults which they commit, are owing rather to want of Judgment or to Incogitancy, than to ill Will or sinister Intention. And when he observes on the one hand, how much the several social Vertues contribute to make Conversation agreeable, delightful and orderly; and on the other hand, how much the contrary Qualities con-

contribute to disturb and bring it into disorder: He thinks himself obliged by these Considerations, and likewise by the Rules of Good-breeding and Decorum, to endeavour to exercise those Vertues which are of so great Use and Ornament.

Liberality in distributing Favours, is another Qualification belonging to Generosity. This is so far acknowledged by most Men, that in ordinary Discourse, the liberal Man is most usually honoured with the name of Generous. But tho' Liberality does not give us a compleat Idea of Generosity; for Generosity is not to be restrained within so narrow a compass: Yet it is true, that this is one of its Characters. Now this Liberality is, in a Generous Man, attended with such Sentiments as these: An Esteem for Mankind on general, which makes him look in them as proper Objects, not only of Justice, but

but also of Kindness and Beneficence; a serenity of Mind mixt with the Perceptions of Kindness and Gratitude, and a sense of Decorum; which kind of Sentiments serve to open his Heart, and to dispose him as well to make suitable acknowledgments of Favours and Obligations, as likewise to do these and other things in such a manner as may seem most becoming a great Mind.

To Generosity do likewise belong Sincerity and Rectitude of Spirit: Of which I shall have occasion to speak more particularly anon.

And to it likewise belong Dispassionateness and Tranquility. 'Tis well known, that Mens Passions and unbridled Appetites do ruffle and disorder them to a very great degree, and by disturbing the regular use of their natural Freedom, and raising Storms and Tempests in their Minds, impel them to the commission of many foolish,

fooliſh, extravagant and wicked things, which afterwards bring upon them ſhame, regret, remorſe of Conſcience, and many other Inconveniences. Now Generoſity is adapted to remedy theſe Evils. For the Generous Man, by the Command he has over his own Spirit, and the Government he maintains over his Paſſions and Inclinations, is the better ſecured in that Tranquility, which the regular uſe of Mens natural Freedom is wont to produce : And ſince he endeavours to do nothing whereof he ſhall have juſt cauſe afterwards to Repent, he is the more likely to eſcape Remorſe of Conſcience ; than which there is nothing that gives the Mind a more ſharp and tormenting Pain.

Evenneſs of Temper in Judging and Acting is another Property of Generoſity. This is much the ſame with that which is ſometimes called in one word Moderation.

And

And is produced or maintained by that Firmneſs of Mind and Tranquility, which I have before mentioned. It is eaſy to diſcern, that the due government of a Man's Spirit, and of his Paſſions, corporeal Impreſſions and Inclinations, the irregularities whereof do ſo much pervert Mens Judgments concerning things, and betray them into ſo many weak and wicked Actions, muſt needs conduce very much to eſtabliſh him in this even Temper of Mind.

Exact obſervation of Decorum, is likewiſe another Property of Generoſity. We know there are ſeveral things, either Lawful or at leaſt countenanced by the general Practice of Men, which yet are really not expedient or fitting to be done; as being againſt Decency and good Grace. In ſuch Caſes, the Generous Man conſiders, not barely what is lawful or practicable, but withal what is decent and

ſeemly.

ſeemly. The reſpect he has for the Humane Nature, enclines him to conceal its imperfections; to cover what is uncomely with the vail of Modeſty; and to ſubmit quietly to the laws of the animal nature without violating Purity or Decency internally in his Mind, or openly in his words or actions. He will not offer unhandſome things to Matrons or Virgins, or put modeſt perſons to the bluſh; and endeavours in general, to avoid ſuch words and geſtures as are ungraceful. So likewiſe he is not apt to be aſſuming, impertinent, or troubleſome in company; to put the banter and ridicule upon others; to reflect upon them or inſult over their weakneſs and imperfection; to pry into other Mens ſecrets, or meddle with matters which do not concern him. He bears with many things, connives at, and paſſes many things over in ſilence. In

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a word, he conſiders his ſex, his age, his ſtation, his character, and the circumſtances of his condition, and endeavours with reſpect to them all, to comport himſelf as neer as he can by the rules of Decorum. And ſince Decency is a thing of a refined and delicate nature, and the perfection as it were of Right and Lawful, as Equity is the perfection of Juſtice: The Generous Man, who reſolves to do, to his power, that which is beſt and moſt becoming, and to attain as high a degree in Vertue as he can, muſt neeeds find himſelf under an obligation to obſerve the rules of Decency.

In ſhort, Generoſity imports an extreme Love and Veneration for Vertue. The Generous Man looks upon Vertue and Goodneſs to be the moſt honourable and becoming thing in the World, and the greateſt Ornament and perfection of the Human nature. It is to him

him the great index and rule of Honourable and Dishonourable. And therefore when he looks round about him, he can see nothing that deserves to be the object of his esteem and ambition in comparison of it: Being satisfied, that there is nothing so worthy of his care and regard, as that which tends to advance him to a conformity unto the supreme and most perfect Being, and which leads him in a direct line to the truest and highest Felicity his nature is capable of. So that when he resolves to use his natural Freedom rightly, and to prosecute with all his might that which is simply and absolutely best; he does so, for the sake of Vertue; That is the secret Spring of his motions, and the Butt of his Ambition.

This may serve for a general explication of the nature of Generosity. In the next place I am to speak somewhat, to shew the agreement

greement and affinity there is between it, and ſeveral other Vertues which have been deſervedly eſteemed of the firſt rank; and likewiſe between it, and ſome of thoſe excellent rules of conduct which have been approved by the common conſent of mankind in moſt ages of the World. And after that, I would conſider briefly the influence it has even upon what is more ſtrictly called Piety and Religion. By all which it may appear, that the ſentiments and diſpoſitions of mind which Generoſity is attended with all, do entirely correſpond and are in effect the ſame with thoſe ſentiments and diſpoſitions which the moſt eminent Vertues and approved rules of Action ſerve to produce in us. And the doing of this will, I conceive, not only afford us a fuller interpretation of the Principle which we are now conſidering, but likewiſe be of conſiderable uſe to us in our Practice.

Now

Now there are ſix Principal Vertues, which I ſhall take particular notice of in this place; to wit, Prudence, Sincerity, and Patience; which are called Primitive Vertues: And Juſtice, Fortitude, and Temperance, which are called Derivative ones.

Prudence is a Vertue, whereby a Man judges rightly of things. And this no Man can well do, who is not competently free from the power of Prejudice, Paſſion, and the other imbecillities which hinder Men from the clear diſcernment of what is good and true. Now it is the generous Mans conſtant endeavour to overcome, and keep his Mind free from thoſe impediments; as I have before noted: And by that means he is very much ſecured from ſeveral of thoſe errors which are oppoſite to Prudence, ſuch as Raſhneſs, Precipitance, Levity, Credulity, Obſtinacy, blind Zeal, Partiality, and

the like: And on the contrary is diſpoſed and enabled to judg and chuſe rightly. To explain this, I ſhall at preſent only make uſe of the following inſtance, waiving others which might be given. We find, there is a ſort of Imprudence which Men are betrayed into by an unaccountable gayety of temper that ſometimes befalls them. And though this be commonly moſt incident to young People, who by reaſon of the fire and briskneſs that is in their Blood and Spirits, are moſt apt to be carried away by vehement and ſudden emotions; yet there are many who retain this levity and gayety of temper, till they come to be far advanced in years. Now Generoſity helps to correct the Irregularities of this temper; as it ballaſts and poiſes the Mind, and excites Men to do thoſe things only, which are grave, manly, and diſcreet; that is, to act according to the rules of Pru-

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dence. And in regard 'tis part of the character of a Generous Man, firmly and advisedly to resolve to prosecute, in all his actions as neer as he can, that which is ultimately and simply best: Whilst we suppose him to do that, we must suppose him to be competently consant and capable of judging what is best: that is, to be at least a competently Prudent Man.

Sincerity is a Vertue, whereby a Man is disposed, sincerely and uprightly to prosecute that which he deems to be simply best. This Vertue is one of the brighteſt characters of the Soul: 'Tis the life and Spirit of other Vertues; And that which is in a particular manner pleasing and acceptable to God Almighty, as we may judg from the nature of the thing, and as sufficiently appears from several expres Declarations in the Gospel of our Saviour. So that 'twill be a great Recommendation to Gene-

rosity, if that be found to have a Cognation with it. Now Sincerity has an especial relation to the Will. It consists in a simplicity of Mind, and a Rectitude of Will and intention. It is that Purity and uncorrupt Chastity of the Will, whereby a Man is engaged to adhere unto that which appears to be best. But Generosity is likewise accompanied with the same disposition of Mind, which Sincerity produces in Men. For Generosity has in like manner an especial relation to the Will. It is attended with that Rectitude of the Will, whereby a Man is continually engaged to endeavour to use his Natural Freedom rightly, and to chuse and do, to his power, in all cases, that which appears to be best. The very description of these two correspond mutually, and enter into one another. Since that which appears to be best, is for an inviolable Law both to the sincere

ſincere, and to the Generous Man; theſe two Vertues muſt needs have the ſtricteſt Connexion imaginable.

As for Patience, which is a Vertue of the Soul, whereby a Man for the ſake of Vertue and Goodneſs is contented to endure thoſe things which are difficult and ungrateful to the Animal nature: This Vertue evidently appertains to Generoſity; and may in partitular be referred to the Maſculine Firmneſs of Mind, which makes part of that character. For Patience do's not reſide in a feeble Spirit; or in a Breaſt agitated with untamed and impetuous Paſſions. It dwells in Maſculine and firm Minds; which are able to endure the ſhock of Hardſhips; and think it inglorious to ſhrink when they are engaged in the Cauſe of Vertue. Thus alſo the Generous Man confirms himſelf in a reſolution to bear the injuries of Men and other

misfortunes that may befall him: And though he does not throw himself rashly into dangers or misfortunes; yet he resolves to go through them with an even and undaunted Spirit. Nor indeed can the Generous Man, without a due Proportion of the Masculine Vertue of Patience, execute those resolutions which he makes of pursuing the highest good. Without it, the formidable prospect of Death, Pain, Poverty, Shame, or the like, would quickly break his Measures, and dissolve his Resolutions. And therefore he thinks he is obliged to arm himself with this Vertue, that he may be able the more constantly and steadily to put in ure the just Resolutions he makes of acting upon the Principles of Honour and Vertue. So likewise we may observe, that there are a great many things which put Men into disorder and impatience, that do befall them unavoid-

ably and without their own choice; ſuch as neither their Induſtry or Foreſight can prevent: And that on the other Hand, Men do oftentimes, by their own folly and peeviſhneſs, create Vexations to themſelves, when it is in their power to be in quiet. And whether Men are under misfortunes of the Firſt or Latter ſort, we find by experience, that the greateſt part of the uneaſineſs they endure in thoſe caſes, is owing to the impatience and ungovernableneſs of their Spirits, by means whereof that which would otherwiſe be eaſy to be endured, becomes intolerable to them. Now as to the vexations which we voluntarily bring upon our ſelves, I need not ſay that Generoſity helps us to endure them, for (which is much better) it does really help to prevent them. It tends to cure Men of thoſe little freaks and imbecillities of Spirit which are the

cauſe of them: And ſo by taking away the cauſe, takes away the effect. And as to the other ſort of misfortunes which 'tis leſs in our power to prevent, Generoſity, which helps us to govern our Paſſions and Appetites, which arms our Minds with Maſculine Reſolutions, in a Word, which makes us ſenſible that there is all the reaſon in the World to ſubmit patiently to the ſoveraign and wiſe Government of Almighty God, whether he diſtribute ſweet or ungrateful things, and to ſuffer hardſhips for the ſake of Vertue: I ſay, Generoſity which operates within us in this manner, muſt needs conduce very much to beget in us a patience and conſtancy of Mind.

Next conſider Juſtice, which is a conſtant and uniform purpoſe of giving to every one his due. Now the Generous Man purſues the dictates of this Vertue. And is willing

willing to do right, both to himſelf, and likewiſe to every body elſe. For he neither envies nor hates any body. He thinks it a diſhonourable part to do an unjuſt thing to another, either by detracting from his juſt deſert, or by wronging him in his Eſtate, his Bed, or his Perſon. And ſo he is kept from ſeveral Vices, which are oppoſite to Juſtice, ſuch as Slander, falſe Teſtimony and Subordination, Bribery and unjuſt Judgment, Covetouſneſs, Extortion, Murder, Adultery, Rapine, Oppreſſion, fraud, Cruelty, and the like. Nay, he is not content to do ſtrict Juſtice to other Men; But chuſeth to render them more than what is in ſtrictneſs due, rather than leſs. He relaxes and qualifies, as far as he lawfully may, what is rigorous and extreme; and exerciſeth Juſtice with that Moderation and Equity which is indeed the Flower and perfection of it. And ſince it is

part of his character, that he has no mighty value for Honour, Riches, or the like external things, he is under the leſs temptation to wrong others in order to advance or enrich himſelf with their ſpoils. So likewiſe he eſteems it a mean and abject thing, to be ungrateful to ſuch as have obliged him or done him good offices: And therefore is careful to ſhew, upon all fit occaſions, his gratitude to his Benefactors; accounting it a piece of Juſtice and Honour ſo to do. And he is likewiſe careful to demonſtrate an entire Fidelity to thoſe who have committed to him a Truſt; accounting it both unjuſt and mean-ſpirited, to be treacherous or unfaithful. And whilſt he conſiders the ſtrait alliance and conſanguinity there is between Man and Man, upon account of the common nature they are all partakers of; and likewiſe the juſt Title that all Men who are not fal-

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len from the common Rights of their nature, have, not only to his esteem and good will, but also to all those good offices which 'tis in his power upon reasonable terms to render to them: He finds himself engaged, even in point of Justice, to be courteous, affable, easy of access, humane, candid, and obliging to all Men; and to exercise, as far as he fairly may, the respective offices of Charity, Beneficence, Hospitality, and Philanthropy, towards them. And as he thinks himself obliged to do those things which Justice requires with respect to mankind: So he considers also the Justice that is due to Almighty God: And this engages him to the exact performance of the respective Offices of Piety which relate to Almighty God. So likewise he remembers, that he ows a duty and Respect to Truth also. And this obliges him to an entire Veracity; and makes him

punctual

punctual to his promiſes and contracts, as far as lies really and *bona fide* in his power. And conſidering, that Lying, Equivocating, or Diſſembling, are mean and raſcally actions, and for the moſt part the tokens of an abject Spirit; he finds himſelf obliged to avoid theſe and ſuch like little Arts, if he would purſue the Character of a Juſt and Generous Man.

As for Fortitude, whereby Men are enabled, for the ſake of Vertue and Goodneſs, to atchieve and undergo great and difficult things, and even to ſuffer Death it ſelf with a firm and intrepid Mind: It is ſo neerly allied to Generoſity, that ſeveral of the Characters of Generoſity have been wont to be aſcribed by Moraliſts to it; and to be repreſented under the name of Fortitude or Magnanimity. Now Fortitude or Magnanimity conſiſting in that true Gallantry of Mind which qualifies

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Men for great undertakings, which enables them to encounter with a conſtant and ſerene mind, the difficulties and dangers that attend elevated imployments both in Peace and War; and all this, in general for the ſake of Honeſty and Vertue, and in particular for the good and ſafety of their Country: Generoſity and It appear to have an undivided cognation. And as Fortitude has in moſt ages been eſteemed and honoured in a peculiar manner; inſomuch that the other good habits or powers of the Soul are called Vertues from the proper name of this: So the Generous Man has a Genius peculiarly ſuited to make good the characters of that Vertue. And though he be as ſenſible of Pain and misfortunes as other Men, yet he endeavours to keep his Spirit from being oppreſſed or ſoftned by them; and in a word, to ſupport himſelf under all, with a ſteadineſs and conſtancy becoming his character. Then

Then for Temperance, which is a Vertue, whereby Men are restrained in the use of sensitive pleasures, that they may the better pursue things more sublime and noble: This is evidently of kin to Generosity; which likewise suggests, that we ought to postpone all manner of sensitive Gratifications to those other exercises of the Mind whereby it is led to that which is simply and absolutely best. He cannot prosecute that which is absolutely best, with a just Vigour, who is continually enclined to gratify the Body in its several Appetites; because there is nothing that does, more than that, hinder Men in the pursuit of Vertue and Goodness. But the Generous Man is sensible, that 'tis unbecoming the dignity of the Rational nature; for a Man to indulge himself too much in corporeal pleasures, or gratify the extravagant desires of the Body: That this would be to

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ſet the Rational and the Animal nature upon the ſame Level, or perhaps to prefer the Latter before the Former: And being ſatisfied, it is no part of true Humility, to condeſcend ſo low, he endeavours to maintain the dignity of that rank and order, wherein God Almighty hath placed him. And all this he does, not out of a Contempt of other Creatures more ignoble than himſelf, but out of a juſt eſteem of the Dignity of his own Order, and out of a ſincere regard to Vertue. And when he obſerves, how much, Voluptuouſneſs tends to bewitch Mens Minds, to render Men ſoft, terrene, and degenerate, and to extinguiſh the Seeds of goodneſs in them: He concludes, that if he be not temperate and diſcreet in the uſe of ſenſual pleaſures, he ſhall be in apparent danger of forfeiting thoſe Vertuous habits and diſpoſitions of Mind, wherein he places his greateſt

greateſt Honour and Happineſs. And thus he is armed againſt ſeveral Vices that are oppoſite to Temperance, ſuch as Laſciviouſneſs, Exceſs in Meats and Drinks, Vanity in Behaviour or Apparel, and other ſoftneſses wherein there is any thing of Luxury or Abuſe.

But further, as touching thoſe excellent Rules of conduct, which I before took notice of, let us ſee how Generoſity ſtands with reſpect to them. Of this ſort there are two principally to be conſidered. "Do as you would be done by: And, "Know thy ſelf.

As for the former of theſe, "Do "unto others as you would they "ſhould do unto you; and, Do not "to others what you would not "they ſhould do unto you: They are ſo eaſy to be underſtood and applied, that I need ſay no more of them, than that they contain the Sum of Natural Juſtice and Equity; and being of a comprehen-

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five and delicate nature, do not only direct us to act according to the Ordinary Rules of Justice, but likewise serve to guide us by the Rules of Equity and Mercy, where those of Justice seem to be either obscure or defective. And this is one great use of Generosity, which is also a Principle so comprehensive, that as I have already observed, it imports in it the Sum of that Justice and Equity which Men ow to one another, and is of so fine and delicate a nature, that it restrains Men from doing many things, which according to human Laws or the ordinary Rules of Justice, may appear lawful, and enclines them oftentimes, as the circumstances of things may be, to do more than those ordinary Rules in strictness require at their hands.

As to the latter Precept, "Know "thy Self. This we are told was formerly had in great Reverence,

rence, insomuch that 'twas supposed to have been immediately communicated unto Men from Heaven—*E Cœlo descendit*, Γνῶθι σεαυτόν. And it well deserves to be esteemed and observed at this day. Now the Knowledge of our selves is of use principally two ways: To wit, As it makes us sensible on the one hand of the Imperfections, and on the other of the Dignity of our Nature. First, by Knowing our Selves, and by contemplating the Infirmities and Imperfections that adhere to our Nature, we are taught to be humble and modest, patient, temperate, submissive to the divine Will, beneficent and merciful, and the like. When we we consider, that our Knowledge and other Abilities are comparatively imperfect, how many things we are ignorant of, and in how many we err and do amiss: This and such like Considerations help to keep us from being Proud and

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Preſuming with reſpect to our ſelves, and from being rigid, cenſorious and ill-natured, with reſpect to others whom we find offending or miſtaken. And, on the contrary, diſpoſe us to Charity, Goodneſs, Forbearance, Candor and Mercy towards them: Since we are thereby made ſenſible, that we our ſelves are liable to many, or all, of the Errors and Offences which we ſee in other Men. So likewiſe when we obſerve, how helpleſs and impotent we are, how unable to forſee or prevent the accidents, revolutions and changes that attend our Lives, and either to procure to our ſelves many of thoſe external good Things which we want, or to avert thoſe Misfortunes which we ſuffer or apprehend, it ſuggeſts to us a notable Leſſon of Patience and of Submiſſion to Almighty God, as the moſt effectual means to keep a ſerenity in our Minds, notwithſtanding all

that may befal us. And further, when we consider the frailty and abjectness of our Bodies, that being the meanest and most despicable part of us, they do not deserve we should be so very intent upon the gratifying of them, much less that our Solicitude about them should either exceed or hinder our care and concern about our nobler and better Part: This instructs us to avoid Covetousness, Intemperance and Excess in the Love or Use of things relating to the Body. And, further, when under the consideration of this Infirmity of our present State, we become sensible, that there are many things necessary to the support and well being of Men, and that therefore such as are destitute of these things, deserve to be consider'd by us, as far as we are fairly able; that is an Argument to us, to give them help and and relief: Especially when we remember, that by reason of the mu-

mutability of our condition in this World, we our ſelves, tho' perhaps at preſent in a flouriſhing State, may by an eaſy turn of Affairs, be brought into the ſame neceſſitous condition we ſee others in.

But then the Knowledge of our ſelves is likewiſe of uſe another way, *viz.* as it makes us ſenſible of the Dignity of our Nature; and by that means engages us to the doing of ſuch things as are becoming the Character we bear in the Creation, and deters us from doing whatever is diſparaging or diſagreeable to that Character. For ſince Vertue is in its Nature Noble and Honourable; and Vice the quite contrary: Upon that Principle, the Knowledge of our Selves ſerves to excite in us on the one hand that laudable Ambition, whereby we aſpire after thoſe things which are Vertuous and truly Honourable, and on the other hand

hand that commendable Shame which deters us from things of the contrary Nature. Now Generosity operates both these ways. It confirms Men on the one hand in a just Humility, Meekness, Patience, Charity, and other like Vertues, as may appear from what has been already said: And on the other hand, disposes Men to those Vertues which are produced and maintained by the consideration of the Dignity of the human Nature, and of the Obligations that result from thence to act agreeably to that Character: But it is more peculiarly suited to operate this latter way: As it excites in Men that noble Ambition, which is grounded on the consideration of the honourble Nature of Vertue, and of the auspicious and happy Consequences it brings after it, and that vertuous Shame which is grounded on the turpitude and dishonourable Nature of Vice, and of the mischievous

chievous and unhappy Effects which attend it. For the Generous Man, according to that excellent Precept, πάντων δὲ μάλιστα αἰδεσθῆναι σαυτόν, "Above all Revere thy Self, would be ambitious of Vertue, tho' he had no prospect of acquiring external Reputation by it, and would be touch'd with a sense of Shame, if he went about to commit a vile Action never so privately, even where he could be in no danger of publick disparagement. So that the Sentiments which are raised in Men by the just Knowledge of themselves, agree with those which are raised in them by the Principle of Generosity: Both serving to spur them on to vertuous and becoming Actions, and to deter them from foul and vitious ones, from much the same Considerations.

But Generosity enters also into that part of Religion which more immediately relates to God Almighty; and mixes it self with the

the habits of Piety and Devotion. There are three great faults, to wit, Superſtition, Hypocriſy, and Prophaneneſs, into one or other of which, thoſe who err with reſpect to Religion, commonly fall. And Generoſity is ſuited to help againſt each of theſe. Againſt Superſtition; as it excites in mens minds manly and becoming thoughts of Almighty God, ſuch as are ſuitable to the Divine Nature: By which means it ſerves to rid their Minds of thoſe light and childiſh conceptions touching the Nature and Worſhip of God, which are the Seeds of Bigottry and Superſtition. For when Men have by the Divine aid, and by due care and exerciſe, habituated their Minds to juſt apprehenſions of the Pure and Excellent Nature of God: They cannot think it ſufficient, to expreſs the veneration and ſervice which they ow unto him, by thoſe trivial and inſignificant inſtances of

of Devotion and Worſhip, or that partial and reſerved Obedience, which ſuperſtitious and weak People are wont to content themſelves withal; or indeed by any thing leſs than an entire dedication of their Souls and Bodies to him, in pure and ardent Devotion, joyned with an entire and hearty Obedience to his Laws; that is, by adjuſting both their Worſhip and Converſation unto a conformity to his moſt Excellent Nature And when likewiſe, they have poſſeſſed their Minds with manly and Rational thoughts of Religion: they will be the leſs ſubject to be carried away by the errours of Enthuſiaſm and pretended Spirituality; which is alſo a kind of Superſtition.

And for Hypocriſy, which is another great Abuſe of Religion; Generoſity is naturally ſuited to cure or prevent it. For Generoſity is wont to be accompanied

with such a Sincerity of Mind, as is not consistent with Hypocrisy. And whilst it teaches Men to act upon the true Principles of Honour, it will easily make them sensible; that 'tis an unworthy and base practice, to go about to delude other Men with a Pretence of Religion, when at the same time they are conscious to themselves, that they have nothing of that Principle within them; and that Religion is a thing of so noble and elevated a nature, that it ought not to be made subservient to the little ends of Worldly profit and interest.

So also Generosity helps against Prophaneness. For since Generosity is founded in the just knowledg of our selves; from the consideration, that we are comparatively frail and impotent Creatures, and entirely dependant on God Almighty for our Being and all that we have; it serves to suppress in

us those extravagant and big thoughts of our selves, which would lead us to prophaneness and contempt of God; and on the contrary to engage us to love and gratitude to his Divine Majesty, from whom we continually receive so many demonstrations of Bounty and Philanthropy. And from the consideration of the infinite distance there is betwixt God and Men, it serves to awaken the innate Principle we have in us, of honouring and reverencing whatever person or being appears to be Great and Excellent; and so engages us to express that Honour and Reverence we have for Almighty God (who is infinitely the greatest and most excellent Being) in such ways as are most proper to signify and declare the same; to wit, by Worship, Reverence of him, and all that relates to him, and by Conformity to his Nature and Laws, as far as we are able. Which

is indeed the Sum of Religion.

From these short instances it may be seen, that Generosity is a Principle neerly allied to the several Vertues of the Divine Life, and likewise extremely accommodated to preserve Men straight and even in the practice of true Religion. And these considerations will, I conceive, serve both to explain the Notion of Generosity, and likewise to shew the intimate Agreement there is between Religion and Honour, being rightly understood and applied. So much then for what I proposed to speak in the Interpretation of Generosity.

But now I am well aware, that 'tis likely, that such persons as have been accustomed to frame a narrow and restrained notion of Generosity, and to think it consists only in Liberality, or what is commonly called good breeding, or such like, may imagine, that I do amiss, in taking it in so large and comprehensive

henſive a ſenſe, and attributing to it ſuch noble Characters, as I have done. But I am perſuaded, that when things come to be weighed, I ſhall be acquitted of blame in that particular. I have been conſidering Generoſity, not barely as a particular Vertue or good quality, but chiefly as ſuch a Principle in the Rational Soul as is of a Metaphyſical and univerſal nature. Now the Principles of this kind are ſuch that they may be applied as variouſly as there are various actions in human life: And ſo muſt needs be of a large and comprehenſive nature, ſince they pervade the whole Body of a mans Cogitations and Actions, and are the Principles from which he Acts, not only in ſome few but in very many caſes. And that Generoſity is a Principle of this kind, may appear from what I have already ſaid. Even mens Natural Temper, diſcovers it ſelf in moſt of their actions, in

Natural, Civil, Moral and Religious ones. And ſo far as it hath influence upon the Mind, produces as great a variety of ſenſations and diſpoſitions in the Man, as there is great variety of Objects about which he is converſant. But the Principles immediately referring to the Mind, are much more accommodated to ſpread through all the actions of a Man: For as the Mind is the ſeat of a Mans Thoughts, and his Thoughts the Spring of his Actions: So the Principles of the Mind, which have the nature of univerſal Cogitations, are as univerſal in their Operation, as they are in their Root; or if you will, as univerſal conſidered objectively, as they are, conſidered formally. Thus Sincerity taken as a general Principle of the Mind, extends it ſelf to moſt of the actions of Human Life, to thoſe which fall under a Civil, Moral or Religious Conſideration: And may be exerted by Men of all Faculties, Profeſſions, Trades, Orders and Degrees, in the actions which relate to the ſeveral conditions of Life, by which they are diverſified from one another, and in thoſe which are common to them all. The ſame may be ſaid of the general Principle of Prudence:

dence: And likewiſe of the general Principle of Generoſity. And if Generoſity be ſuch a Principle, as is, not only of a large and extended Nature, but is likewiſe in an extraordinary manner congenial and agreeable to the moſt refined Principles of our Minds, and is accompanied with, or ſerves to produce in us, thoſe ſentiments and diſpoſitions of Mind, which tend to the advancement and perfection of our Nature: I ſay, if the Caſe be ſo, I am perſuaded, I cannot be juſtly accuſed of having extended the Notion of it too far, or having given it too high Characters.

But I think I need not be very ſolicitous about this Matter. 'Tis ſufficient for me, that however ſome Men may diſlike or quarrel with the Name of Generoſity, becauſe perhaps they have been uſed to ſpeak of thoſe things which make up its Character, in other Terms than thoſe I here uſe, or for other Reaſons beſt known to themſelves: Yet they cannot, without doing ſome violence to their own Minds, but admire and eſteem the Thing, and acknowledge that the Characters which I have ſaid do belong to it, import that

which is really Noble and Illuſtrious. And peradventure, they may diſcern that Mankind do univerſally agree in theſe Sentiments, when they obſerve how naturally and readily Men are wont to deſcribe Perſons or Actions that are eminent for their goodneſs and rectitude, by the Name of Generous, Great, Noble, and ſuch like Epithets, which properly belong to this Character.

If then the ancient Philoſophers and Moraliſts do not make mention of Generoſity under that particular Name, or deſcribe it with exactly the ſame Characters which I have herein attributed to it, that ought not to be any Prejudice againſt what I have ſaid upon this Head. We all ſpeak the ſame thing in ſubſtance and effect, and ſometimes in much the ſame words. What is Generoſity but an ἀνδρεία, a fortitude or manlineſs of Spirit, a μεγαλοψυχία, or greatneſs of Soul? What is it but a *Compoſitum jus faſq; animi*, a ſteady rectitude of the Mind, a *Generoſum honeſtum*, a generous Vertue? What is it but a πρᾳότης a goodneſs of Temper, a τὸ θεῖον or divine Principle accommodated to the human Nature, and reſiding

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in human Breaſts? The like might be ſaid in many other Particulars.

Suppoſe alſo that the ſacred Writers themſelves do not make mention of Generoſity under that expreſs Name, or under the ſelf-ſame Characters by which I have deſcribed it; neither will that, I conceive, juſtly prejudice what I have ſaid upon this Subject. If there be in Men ſuch Principles as Self-love and Self-eſteem, as Ambition, as Honour and Shame: If theſe Principles may and ought to be made uſe of for the purpoſes of Vertue: If the juſt uſe of theſe Principles ſerves to produce Generoſity in Men: If Generoſity, by operating upon theſe Principles and conducting them rightly, be helpful to advance Men in Vertue and Goodneſs: If the Characters herein aſcribed to Generoſity be conſonant to the pureſt Principles of our Minds, and to the clear and undoubted Notions which wiſe Men have all along had of things: Then the main of what I have before offer'd, will not, I conceive, be ſhaken by a ſide-wind Objection. It was not, nor is it neceſſary, or indeed poſſible, that Men in all Countries or Ages of the World ſhould follow juſt the ſame

Modes of conception or expreſſion, or the ſame Methods of Diſcourſe. There is, no doubt, a great Latitude that may be fairly taken, in the manner of diſcourſing about the particular Vertues, and of referring them to certain general Principles of the rational Soul. Accordingly, we find that the Holy Writers themſelves do fall into that variety in this Caſe, which the nature of things ſo eaſily admits. They often vary from one another in their Expreſſions, and in their Methods of Diſcourſe and Exhortation upon much the ſame Subjects. They give us diverſly the deſcriptions or characters of particular Vertues: Sometimes in ſuch manner as ſeems agreeable to the true nature of them, and at other times in ſuch manner as is moſtly ſuited to the preſent Argument or Purpoſe of the Writer, or to the Principles of the Mind to which they are for that time referred. Let us for the preſent only take notice, how many ſeveral ways Vertue in general, or Religion, or Holineſs, or Goodneſs, (call it by what ſuch-like Name you will) is repreſented to us by the ſeveral Writers of the holy Books. Sometimes it is repreſented under the name and cha-

characters of Wisdom, as in the Writings of King *Solomon*. Sometimes under the name of Righteousness (that is, Justice or Rectitude) as in several of the sacred Books. Sometimes it is comprehended under the general Phrase, *The Fear of the Lord*, as in many of the sacred Books both of the old and new Testament. Sometimes under that of Love or Dilection, comprizing in it the love of God and of our Neighbour, as in some of the Books of the old Testament, and most of the Books of the new, particularly in the Writings of St. *John* and St. *Paul*. Sometimes under the general Term, Faith, exhibiting to us the sum of our Duty, as in several Books of the new Testament, especially in the Writings of St. *Paul*. If therefore the several holy Writers vary from one another in this manner, we need not wonder that others should vary from them in things wherein there is naturally so much Latitude. Admit then that some one or more of the holy Writers intimates, that Faith is a Principle serving to produce in Men several particular Vertues, we must not think that that contradicts or excludes what is spoken by such one or more of the holy Writers

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as intimates, that Love, or the Fear of God, are Principles ſerviceable to that end. Here are now, ſuppoſe, before our Eyes four things which may be deemed Principles of Vertue and Goodneſs; *viz.* Faith, Love, Fear of God, and Generoſity. But ſurely the ſaying that Faith is ſuch a Principle, does not exclude Love from being ſuch too. And ſaying that Love is ſuch a Principle, does not exclude the Fear of God from being ſuch too. And ſaying that the Fear of God is ſuch a Principle, does not exclude Generoſity from being ſuch too; becauſe they are, each of them, more or leſs ſuch. Nor on the other ſide, will Generoſity exclude the other Principles of Faith, Love, or the Fear of God, or they exclude it, any more than they exclude one another, or any more than they exclude Prudence and Sincerity (conſidered as general Principles of Vertue) or indeed any other general Principle beſides, which ſerves for producing Vertue in Men. The Principles aforementioned may be all of them jointly and ſeverally Principles productive of Vertue. And accordingly, to them, as ſuch, either to all of them together, or to any of them apart,

apart, ſeveral particular Vertues may properly be referred. And of this we have, in the caſe of Faith, a great Inſtance in the 11*th* Chapter to the *Hebrews*, where we find attributed to Faith, a great number of Vertues which diſtinguiſhed and ſignalized the Heroes and good Men in ſeveral Ages of the World. So that upon the Matter, the conſideration of the Style, or the manner of Writing, uſed by the holy Penmen of the Scripture, will not, I conceive, afford any juſt exception againſt what I have before offer'd, or give any occaſion to doubt but that Generoſity is ſuch a Principle of Vertue and Goodneſs as I pretend it is. But to ſpeak freely, why indeed ſhould we think, that none of the holy Writers take notice of the Principle of Generoſity; when we find that St. *Paul* gives ſo lively a deſcription of it, in which he concludes and ſums up his other particular Exhortations, *Phil.* 4. 8. *Finally, my Brethren,* ſays he, *whatſoever things are True, whatſoever things are Honeſt* [or Venerable] *whatſoever things are Juſt, whatſoever things are Pure, whatſoever things are Lovely, whatſoever things are of good Report; if there be any Vertue, and if there*

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be any Praiſe [that is, if they be Vertuous and Praiſe-worthy] *think on theſe things.* And, when we likewiſe find in general, that the ſeveral Vertues which I have ſhewn do belong to its Character, are by frequent and earneſt Precepts and Exhortations inculcated upon Men throughout their Writings, tho' in other Words perhaps, or under other Heads and Relations; I ſay, when we find the Caſe to be thus, why ſhould we think, that the holy Writers take no notice of this Principle? We need not be much concerned about a Word or Name, when we have the Thing and Subſtance. If the Thing may in the Subſtance of it be found in Scripture: Or if it be not really and materially repugnant to what is delivered there: Or if (which is all one in effect) it may be demonſtrated by rational and convincing Conſiderations, to be a good and uſeful Principle; that ought, as I take it, to content us.

II. In the next place I ſhould endeavour to ſhew the uſefulneſs of the Principle of Generoſity for the due Government of our Actions. But from the Interpretation of this Principle, which I have before offer'd, we may pretty well

well discern that it is like to be of great use for that purpose. And this will in great measure supersede what I intended to speak under this Head; at least, will oblige me to handle it with the more brevity.

We find, there is a vast variety of Circumstances wherein Men may be placed when they come to chuse and act. Men fall at times under different Relations to one another; and their Cases come to be diversified by Circumstances and Accidents emerging. By which means it comes to pass, that they are oftentimes at a loss how to chuse and act, even in Cases, which, if they were strip'd of several of their Circumstances, would seem plain and clear. And thus being in a kind of suspense, they are many times impelled one way or other by very light Moments, and often chuse and act for the worse. Men often encourage themselves to the doing of what they acknowledge in general to be unlawful or unfitting, by little excuses and pretences which they fetch from the Circumstances of the Case they are in; and being byassed and enclined to comply with their Passions and Interests, make use of these

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Arts to vindicate their Reputation with Men, or avert the checks and reproaches of their own Minds; and so insensibly beguile themselves into base and vitious Actions whilst they pretend both to know and practise better. So likewise, there are many Cases wherein a thing, about the doing or refusing whereof we come to deliberate, may in strictness be lawful to be done, but peradventure may not be expedient, fitting, or honourable. Again, some things lie as it were between the Confines of Vertue and Vice, lawful and unlawful. A little excess or defect may make the Action either vertuous or vitious, as the Case may be. Now in such Cases as these, it is of mighty use to lay before our selves some Rules or Principles of universal extent, which will reach our Case whatever almost it be, and bring us under their obligation, where particular ones either would fall short, or may seem to be less clear and undoubted, or are capable of being eluded by the subtilty which we are wont to make use of for the more secure and uninterrupted gratification of our Desires. And such a Principle is this of Generosity: Which they that are accustomed

ſtomed to put it in practice, ſenſibly find to be of great and univerſal influence, and to be as well a Reſtraint upon them from committing of many things which perhaps might upon the foot of particular Vertues or Rules of Action, be deemed lawful, as likewiſe an incitement to them to the doing of many things which particular Vertues, conſidered ſtrictly, or as they are ordinarily wont to be, may not abſolutely require.

Another conſiderable uſe of this Principle is, That it eaſily and without labour of Thought opens it ſelf to our Minds; and ſo is always ready and at hand for our direction. It ſometimes falls out, that when we come to act, we are unreſolved whether we ſhall do a thing or not, and before we can well reſolve, are obliged to argue and conſider with our ſelves (more or leſs, as the Caſe may be) and ſo come gradually to a Reſolution, by a train of inductions, to the making whereof is required ſome intention or application of Mind. And on the other ſide, it ſometimes falls out, that the nature of the thing before us is ſuch, that it will not give us leave to ſpend much time in debating

bating the Matter with our ſelves, but requires an immediate Reſolution to be taken. Now it muſt needs be of great advantage to us in ſuch Caſes, to propoſe to our ſelves, ſome ſuch Principle or Principles, as do eaſily and inſtantly open themſelves to our Minds, and without labour of Thought ſuggeſt what is fit to be done, 'Tis eaſie to diſcern, that one conſiderable uſe of that excellent Rule, *Do as you would be done unto*, conſiſts in this, that it gives us a ready direction on the ſudden, and quickly clears the thing in hand from many of the Difficulties which our prepoſſeſs'd Affections or Inclinations would mix with it. For by making the Caſe our own, we quickly diſcern what we our ſelves would deſire to have done to us, and by conſequence, how we ſhould carry it to others in the ſame circumſtances. Thus it is with reſpect to Generoſity. It operates by plain, ſimple and eaſie Suggeſtions: It leaves us only to reſolve upon the ſingle Point, whether the thing be decent and honourable; whether it be fit for a Man of Spirit and Temper, to do that about which we deliberate; whether, admitting it be lawful to do the thing, it would

would not be much better and more honourable to do otherwiſe; or the like. It operates in Men upon theſe Occaſions, by ſuch a Sincerity of Mind as diſpoſes them to prefer that which is beſt and moſt becoming. And tho' it helps them to reſolve on the ſudden, yet it helps them to reſolve rightly. Now I believe it will be readily acknowledged, that a Principle which works this way, muſt needs be of great uſe. And this will be further confirmed to us, if we conſider the eaſineſs and advantage there is in acting by a Principle that is homogeneous and all of a piece, beyond what there is in being guided by a great many particular Rules, which ly broken and piece-meal in the Mind; and not having a ſtrait connexion with one another may eaſily ſlip from the Memory when they ſhould be put in practice, or if we remember them, are likely in many Caſes to be defective and inadequate. Proverbs and Maxims well applied, are profitable to ripen our experience in things, and to help us in our Practice; and particular Precepts of Vertue have their uſe: But there ſeems to be nothing more effectual to render the tenour of Mens Actions

ons ſtrait, even and uniform, than a general Principle of the Mind that is entire and one ; which operates without varying or mixing of Ideas ; and as it cannot eaſily be abſent from the Mind when they come to act, ſo neither is it likely to prove ſhort and defective. And ſuch a one is the Principle now before us.

Another conſiderable uſe of this Principle, is, That 'tis a mighty help to Mens improvement in Vertue. I do not mean barely, that 'tis in general accommodated to ſerve this end, as ſeveral other things are : But if I am not miſtaken, it has ſomething extraordinary in it, effectual for that purpoſe : Inſomuch that he who will purſue its Dictates, may promiſe himſelf ſuch improvements in Vertue, as are not to be expected from any other but a lively and vigorous Principle. For the truth of this I may ſafely appeal to the experience of thoſe who have accuſtomed themſelves to act upon this Principle. But it will appear to have nothing of improbability in it, if we conſider well on the one hand the nature of Generoſity, and on the other hand the courſe and order wherein Mens cogitations

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and actions were wont to be produced and conducted, together with the Principles they naturally act upon. We ſhall not perhaps think it ſtrange, that Generoſity ſhould have this effect, if we conſider that it opens Mens Minds to great and exact Thoughts; that it ſteers and directs the Will in its right courſe; that it ſerves to repreſent Vertue as a lovely thing, and puts Men into a Method of doing and repeating vertuous Actions with Delight; and by that means, as alſo by exciting in them a commendable Ambition of excelling in Vertue as the moſt honourable thing in the World, engages them vehemently in the purſuit of it. But ſince there is nothing ſo likely to convince Men in this Matter, as their own tryal and experience, that is it which I ſhall principally recommend to them. And there is the greater encouragement to make a Tryal, becauſe they cannot reaſonably think, that, ſuppoſing it be not a help, it will be any impediment to them in a vertuous courſe; or that the meaſures it puts them into will be harſh and undelightful, when the Principle it ſelf is ſo congenial, and ſo agreeable to the pureſt and moſt uncorrupt Sentiments of their Minds. In

In ſum. If this Principle were well purſued, there would in all appearance be a great deal more Juſtice, Order, Quiet and good Agreement in the World, than now there is. It is in its nature extreamly accommodated to produce theſe auſpicious effects. And being of a very large and extended nature, it reaches to all orders and degrees of Men. It enters into the Laws of Nature and of Nations: Which cannot well ſubſiſt without a regard to the Rules of Humanity, Decency and Honour. It mixes it ſelf with the Laws of particular Polities; and by diſpoſing Men to a regular performance of the reſpective Duties relating to Government and Subjection, tends to preſerve that Order and Quiet which is the laſt end of Government. Thus a Generous Prince will endeavour to adminiſter his Government with an even and ſteady hand, to protect his Subjects ſtrenuouſly, to maintain the juſt Honour of the Crown and Faith of the Treaſury, to ſhun thoſe little Arts which are ſometimes made uſe of to amaſs Wealth, or to encroach on the Rights of Subjects or Neighbours. He will think himſelf obliged to avoid whatever is mean, diſhonourable

honourable and unbecoming his Character: And by how much he is elevated in Power and Dignity above other Men, will esteem himself by so much the more engaged to observe, as near as he can, the Rules of Conduct and Honour. And on the other side, Generous Subjects will not be peevish and ill-natured towards their Prince, or rashly put on his Actions an unfavourable Construction: They will not envy him for his Greatness, or his just Rights and Prerogatives: They will chearfully render him his Tributes and Duties: In a word, they will honour his Person and obey his Commands; and where they cannot *bona fide* in Law or Conscience do the latter, they will meekly submit and pay a Deference to his Authority, tho' they cannot actively obey it; chusing rather to suffer in their own private Concerns, than by opposition to affront their Prince, or disturb the repose and tranquility of the Publick. Thus the Principle of Generosity is of great benefit to the State.

And so it is likewise to the Church. It will dispose the Clergy to be Manly, Grave and Discreet in discharging the Offices

Offices of their Function; to exercise Discipline with a Courage and Exactness, mixed with Temper and Moderation; to be vigilant and careful in looking to their respective Charges; to perform the Offices of divine Worship with such a Decency, Order and Devotion, as may be suitable to the nature of the thing, and helpful to maintain it in that just esteem which it ought to have in the World; to shut out of their Discourses and Instructions, precarious Hypotheses, pious Frauds, Pedantry and Ostentation of pretended Learning, indecent Expressions, and whatever is disagreeable to true Reason and the holy Scriptures; to avoid Simoniacal Arts and mean Compliances; and, in a word, whatever is really unbecoming their Order. And on the other side, a Generous Man of the Laity, will respect and esteem the Clergy for their Office-sake; he will neither envy them their Revenues nor defraud them of their Dues; he will cover their Faults, and candidly receive their Instructions; he will not for slight and trivial pretences make or countenance a Separation from the Church under which he was born, or break

break its Communion and disturb its Peace for the sake of things confessedly harmless and indifferent in themselves; and as he is not in his Temper inclinable to oppose his Governors, so he has no Temptation either to think himself exempt from their Authority, or to imagine that a thing indifferent in it self can meerly by the command of a Superiour be rendred unlawful. In short, Generosity opens Mens Minds to such Sentiments as dispose them to Modesty, Peaceableness and Goodness of Temper: Which cannot but be of great Benefit both in Church and State.

But Generosity is also of great use to the Publick, by its suitableness to influence all Orders and Degrees of Men. It is indeed a Principle in which the Nobility and Gentry seem to have in some sort a more peculiar Interest than other Men. Yet there is no Man, tho' of meaner Fortunes, but he is more or less concerned in it. All Men have equally a natural freedom of acting, and are, as far as relates immediately to the Laws of Vertue, equally engaged to use that Freedom rightly; being equally entituled to the Rewards of using it right-

ly, and ſubject to the Puniſhments which enſue the Abuſe of it. And ſo alſo all Men who are not fallen from the Rights of the human Nature, are intereſſed in that Reputation and Eſteem which is due to vertuous and worthy Actions; and are concerned to maintain a Reputation accordingly. However there ſeem to be additional Obligations lying upon the Nobility and Gentry, to act upon the true Principles of Honour, which affect them more peculiarly than other Men: The honourable Style and Titles that belong to them, as well as the Eminence of their Station and Degree ſhould put them continually in Mind of acting upon theſe Principles, and of endeavouring to ſurpaſs others therein. For what can be more diſagreeable, than for a Gentleman or Man of Quality, to be of a pitiful ſordid Spirit, to be rough and ill-bred, and deſtitute of all ſenſe of Honour and Vertue. And on the contrary, it muſt needs be a great Ornament to ſuch Perſons to have that firmneſs and rectitude of Mind, that candour and goodneſs of Temper, that

that Civility and decent Addreſs, and that conformity to the Laws of Decorum, Honour and Vertue; which are Properties of Generoſity. And herein, thoſe of ancient Families, and thoſe of later Creation, are both concerned. He that is Noble by Deſcent, has great Obligations to ſpur him on to Generous and Worthy Actions: He has the Obligations that ariſe from the Dignity in which he is placed, and likewiſe the Example of his brave Anceſtors; which ought to inſpire him with a juſt emulation of their Vertue, and make him afraid of incurring the Character of Degenerous, ——— *Magnorum indignus Avorum.* And he that has acquired Nobleſs by his own Merit, has, not only the Obligations which ariſe from the Dignity of his preſent Station, but alſo thoſe concurrent Reaſons which ſhould engage him to act ſuitably to the Character he has gained; leſt he ſhould afterwards forfeit by Ignoble Actions, the Eſteem and Dignity which he had before ſo worthily acquired, and ſhould as it were degenerate from himſelf. Theſe are Conſi-

derations which as they more particularly affect the Nobility and Gentry, so they ought to be of great weight with them. It is true, that the most solid Obligations of all, to Generosity, are those which result from the Nature of Things, and which concern all Men equally of whatever degree. For 'tis undoubtedly more honourable to imitate God Almighty himself, than the most vertuous and excellent Men that ever were: And there are stronger Reasons to engage Men to a generous and vertuous Behaviour, which may be fetch'd from the nature of Vertue it self, than any that arise barely from the consideration of secular Dignity and Eminence, or the Example of Ancestors. Nevertheless, where there are concurrent Reasons, some of higher, others of lower Obligation, they ought all to be allowed their just force, and all made use of to engage Men to honourable and vertuous Courses, since all the Arguments of both sorts which can be brought, are commonly found hardly effectual for that purpose. But as Generosity is a Principle

ple of acting, very much becoming Perſons of elevated Character and great Fortunes; and they have additional Arguments above many other Men, to engage them to the practice of it: So it is eaſie to diſcern, that the practice of it is like to be more illuſtrious in them, and more beneficial to the World, than the practice of the ſame in Men of inferiour Condition. The Vices of great Men are more conſpicuous than thoſe of meaner Folks: And ſo are their Vertues. Their Character and Station is more Publick, and their Example both of greater force and of more diffuſed Influence: And the greater is their Power of doing either good or hurt. They have commonly many Tenants, Clyents and Dependents, to whom their Generous Behaviour is like to bring great Advantage, and the contrary, great Miſchief and Damage: And perhaps the well or ill-being in the World, of theſe People, muſt be in great meaſure owing to the generous or ungenerous diſpoſition of their Patrons. So that it muſt needs be of very diffuſive Benefit, for Men who

have high Characters or great Commands, who are Governours of Territories, or Lords of great Demeans, or who have great Offices and Entraſtments in the State, and in Proportion, for others of leſſer Quality or Power, to be of a true and generous Temper. And this will be, not only of great Ornament, but likewiſe of great uſe to themſelves. It will gain them the Affection and Eſteem of their Dependants and Neighbours, and likewiſe their Prayers and good Wiſhes; it will give them Power and Sway in their Countries; it will engage all that know them to ſtand by them, and render them all the good Offices they can: In ſhort, it will procure them the ſatisfaction and pleaſure of Mind that attends generous and worthy Actions in this Life, and the Rewards of Vertue in the future Life.

It would moreover be of great Advantage to the Publick, if Men in their ſeveral Profeſſions and Employments would purſue this Principle more exactly. And the more reputable a Mans Profeſſion is, he has in a ſort the greater Obligation upon him

him ſo to do. Thus, for Inſtance, a Generous Lawyer would think it diſhonourable to betray a Cauſe he is entruſted in; to plead in a Cauſe, after he is fully ſatisfied 'tis unjuſt, with that warmth and application which is due only to a juſt one; to give Advice with a regard rather to his own Profit, than either to the Law or the Suitors Benefit; to blow the Coals of Contention, or encourage litigious and frivolous Suits which he knows before-hand will be of no Fruit to the Party; or in more juſt or colourable Cauſes to ſpend the Clients Mony unneceſſarily in skirmiſhing and playing of Prizes about Matters wherein Juſtice or the Merits of the Cauſe are nothing concerned; to apply the Law to the contriving or defending of Frauds and Oppreſſions, or pervert it to the hurt or ruin of the innocent and honeſt Perſon whom it is ordained to protect. Theſe things, and ſuch like, a Generous Man, whether he be of higher or lower Character in the Profeſſion, will think himſelf obliged to avoid as diſho-

nourable and baſe. And the ſame Principle will influence the Phyſitian and Men of other Profeſſions, in their reſpective Employments. And likewiſe the Merchant and Tradeſman in his Dealings and Commerce. It would be a means to reſtrain Men from the injurious Arts of Monopoly and Exaction, from Lying, Diſſembling and other inſidious and ill Practices that are too often uſed in buying and ſelling. And as the ſeveral ill Practices before mentioned, are diſhonourable in themſelves, contrary to the Rules of Sincerity and Juſtice, and prejudicial to the good Order and Proſperity of the Publick: So the Vertues oppoſite thereunto, which Generoſity is ſuited to produce, are both excellent in themſelves, and likewiſe of great benefit to the Publick.

Nor is there indeed any Body of ſo inferiour a Station in the Commonwealth, but what is capable of acting, in ſome meaſure, by this Principle. The meaneſt Artificers and Countrymen have a Reputation as well as other Men, and are concern-

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ed to preſerve it inviolate. They are all under the Laws of Vertue and Decorum. They have all a Freedom of Nature, and can reſolve to uſe it for the beſt Purpoſes. And ſometimes are found to act upon better and nobler Principles, than Men of Character and Education. It muſt be confeſs'd, that Generoſity does not conſiſt in bearing the Port of a Gentleman, or making a Figure in the World. It is compatible with all Conditions of Human Life. And is indeed more effectually demonſtrated by ſubmitting to a mean Fortune for the ſake of Honeſty and Vertue, than by ſeeking a higher Character or Station at the Price of good Conſcience or Diſcretion. It is exerciſable by all Men in their ſeveral Degrees, whether they be in higher or lower Capacity; and ſerves to diſtinguiſh Men by their Minds and Spirits, rather than by their external Character or Station. Particularly, it may be exerciſed in the ſtate of Marriage or ſingle Life, of Maſterſhip or Service, of Travel or Reſidence, of Plenty or Penury; in Offi-

ces Judicial or Miniſterial, in Employments Civil or Military, in Peace or in War, in Victory or Defeat, in Honour or Diſgrace, in Health or Sickneſs, in Safety or Danger. It is of uſe to preſerve Peace and good Underſtanding between Domeſticks and Kinsfolks, between Neighbours and Townſmen, and People that have mutual Intercourſe; by engaging Men to that Civility, Complaiſance and Decency of Deportment, which is of great force to prevent Quarrels or Miſ-underſtandings, and the ill Conſequences of them; by deterring Men from a ſordid or provoking Carriage towards one another; by cureing or preventing that Envy and Ill-nature which too often happen between Men of the ſame Callings or of the ſame Families or Neighbourhoods; and which ſometimes produce miſchievous Effects. It will help to give a Sweetneſs and Ornament to Converſation: And make Friendſhips and Correſpondencies delightful, orderly and laſting. In a word, there is no State of Life, or Relation that Men ſtand in to one another, which

which excludes the exerciſe of it. Thus it is very ample and extended in its Influence, and helps Men to govern their Actions in ſuch manner as is very conducive to preſerve Vertue, Order, Quiet and good Agreement amongſt Men. As to ſeveral other particular Uſes of this Principle, they may, many of them, be ſo evidently collected from what has been ſpoken in the Deſcription and Interpretation of it, which I am not willing to repeat; and others may be ſo eaſily ſupplied from any Mans own Obſervation, that I think it needleſs to enter upon detailing them. So much then for the Uſefulneſs of this Principle.

But after all, if any Man, upon comparing the Temper of Mind and Courſe of Action of thoſe who are or paſs for Generous Men, with the Deſcription which I have given of Generoſity, ſhould pretend that Generoſity, as I have deſcribed it, looks rather like an airy Idea than a thing practicable by Mankind; ſince it would be hard (if not impoſſible) to find a Man endued with all thoſe

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Qualities which I have aſcribed to it: I ſay, if any Man ſhould object in this manner, he may pleaſe to obſerve, that I do not ſay, he cannot be a Generous Man who has not every particular Qualification which I have aſcribed or which may be aſcribed to that Character. A Man may, no doubt, be a Generous and Vertuous Man, though he be not perfect in Generoſity and Vertue. The Habits of the Mind are capable of ſeveral degrees, or receive (as they ſpeak) *Magis & Minus*. There is confeſſedly a great deal of difference between Vertue conſidered formally or in its pure Nature, and conſidered ſubjectively or under that Allay in which it is wont to appear in human Actions. It were indeed much to be wiſh'd, that Mankind could as eaſily expreſs the Purity and Sublimity of Vertue in their Spirits and Actions, as they can repreſent it in Words and Deſcriptions. But this is not to be expected. For my part, I am as ready as any one, to acknowledge the Imbecillity of our Nature, ſince I find ſo many ſenſible Proofs of it in other

ther Men, but particularly in my ſelf. And, I believe, it is a ſubject of great Grief to thoſe who ſincerely aſpire after Vertue, to find ſo many Obſtructions and Impediments in their Progreſs, ariſing from their own Nature: To find themſelves divided as it were againſt themſelves, ſo that whilſt one part of them is enclined to make its Efforts after Vertue, another part of them retards and hinders by its revulſive Motions. This is the conflict of the Fleſh and Spirit, which gives Men ſo many difficulties, and renders their practice of Vertue ſo feeble and imperfect. But as this ſhews only the Imperfection of our Nature, ſo it can be no juſt Argument againſt the excellency of this or any other Vertue conſidered in it ſelf. If then we would take an Idea of any Vertue, we muſt not take it barely from the practice of particular Men, or the feeble Repreſentations which they are wont to give of it in their Spirits and Actions, but from that and from the nature of Vertue it ſelf together. We are to conſider the nature of things,

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and to frame a Notion of the excellency of the Principles of our Minds by the consideration of their abstracted Nature, and of their Conformity to that Exemplar of Perfection which is in the divine Mind. If therefore we find the Characters of Generosity agreeable to the noblest and divinest Principles of our Minds, in conformity to that original Perfection which is in the divine Nature it self (to which all Vertues and good Qualities that are in Men, are in their measure and degree conformable and correspondent; otherwise they could not be such:) We cannot reasonably deny it to be in it self of that Excellency and Usefulness which I have mentioned, how faintly or imperfectly soever it may be exhibited in the Spirits and Practice of particular Men. But it ought to be thought sufficient, that all the Characters which I have attributed to it, are to be found upon some ones or others of that Body of great and good Men which have been or are in the World; and consequently have had, and now have, a real Existence. From hence

hence then we may conclude, that there is in reality ſuch a Principle, and that it is in ſome degree attainable by us. And the more excellent a Principle it is in it ſelf, we ought in reaſon the more earneſtly to endeavour to attain as great a Perfection in it as 'tis poſſible for us: Not fainting though we cannot make good in our Spirits and Actions all the Characters of it, but endeavouring to make good as many of them as we are able; and labouring throughout the courſe of our Life (which will be a noble Ambition) to make continually further Advances.

Having thus given a Deſcription of Generoſity, I think it ſuperfluous to uſe Arguments to engage Men to the Love and Practice of it. If it be of ſo lovely and excellent a Nature, as I have ſet it forth to be, that is the moſt forcible Argument in the World, why we ſhould endeavour after it. One need not take pains to incite Men to love a beautiful Object; they do it naturally, and cannot help it. Demonſtrating that a thing is ſuch, is beyond all the collateral Arguments

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of Perſuaſion that can be uſed. If in the proceſs of this Diſcourſe, I have done that with reſpect to Generoſity, there will be no need of further Perſuaſions: And if I have not, Perſuaſions would be inſignificant.

III. In regard, therefore, Generoſity is a thing ſo excellent in its Nature, and ſo beneficial in its uſe, 'tis like to be worth our Pains to enquire, How it may be acquired, or afterwards improved in our Minds. Now when I ſpeak of acquiring it, I do not ſuppoſe that there is any Man, by Nature, totally void of it, or at leaſt of ſome Prediſpoſition to it. All Men have the Seeds and Rudiments of it ſo far as they have a ſenſe of Good and Evil, Decency and Indecency, Honour and Shame. But ſince thoſe Rudiments cannot properly, of themſelves, give Men the denomination of Generous; for nothing can do that, but ſome degree of the habit of Generoſity: He who would acquire that Character, muſt improve thoſe Rudiments to that degree, at leaſt, which may be effectual

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to denominate him ſuch. Now to diſcover how this may be done, there is not, I conceive, need of any extraordinary Art. The thing is plain and obvious to any Mans Underſtanding.

Firſt, therefore, we muſt addreſs our ſelves in a due manner to God Almighty, beſeeching him to beſtow upon us this Vertue. And, Secondly, we muſt firmly and maturely reſolve to do all that we can poſſibly to attain it. The Conſideration, that God Almighty is the Soveraign Author and Giver of all Vertues, ſhews the neceſſity of the former: And the Conſideration, that Men cannot ordinarily become Vertuous or Happy, without their own Choice and Endeavour, ſhews the neceſſity of the latter. And indeed the reaſonableneſs and neceſſity of doing theſe two Things is ſo evident, that I think it needleſs either to inſiſt upon proveing it, or to uſe Arguments to engage Men to put them in practice. But it muſt be obſerved, that theſe two ought to go hand in hand. And both muſt be performed with that Sincerity

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of Mind which is neceſſary upon ſo juſt an occaſion. As for what relates to our own Endeavours, the Method we take in other Caſes, will ſerve in this. If we would acquire a Habit of Juſtice, Temperance, or the like Vertues: We ſtedfaſtly reſolve, and excite our ſelves, to perform thoſe Offices which pertain to Juſtice, Temperance, *&c.* and endeavour to avoid the contrary Vices: If we offend, we renew our good Reſolutions, and with doubled care and diligence endeavour to put them in Execution. The like we muſt do in this Caſe. And herein we have this further Encouragement, that the ſame Methods which ſerve for acquiring this Habit, will likewiſe ſerve for our improveing in it. But more particularly, let us conſider briefly, in what manner our Endeavours upon this occaſion may be exerted.

Firſt; becauſe we find it natural to Mankind to act agreeably to the Notions which they have conceived of things: And becauſe Men cannot Chuſe, nor by conſequence Act, rightly, till they can competently diſtinguiſh

guiſh between things, and know what is fit to be choſen and what is to be refuſed: It is neceſſary, therefore, that we endeavour in the firſt place to poſſeſs our Minds with juſt Sentiments concerning the nature of Things; particularly, concerning the Differences between Good and Evil, Decent and Indecent, Honourable and Diſhonourable. So alſo, becauſe it is found by experience, that there are many things which Men will not ſet about in good earneſt, till ſuch time as they are convinced that they are under ſome Obligation to the doing of them, or that it is for their Honour or Intereſt to do them: It is neceſſary, that we repreſent to our Minds with all the force and perſpicuity poſſible, thoſe Conſiderations which demonſtrate, as well the honourable and becoming nature of Vertue and its happy Conſequences, as likewiſe the firm and indiſpenſable Obligation we are under, to act according to the Rules which it preſcribes. And, becauſe, on the other hand, it is found by experience, that 'tis of great uſe to reſtrain Men from the Commiſſion or Practice of ſeveral

ral things, to convince them that they ought not to do those things, and that the doing of them will be both very Pernicious and very Dishonourable to them: It seemeth necessary, that we likewise represent to our Minds, with all the force and perspicuity possible, those Considerations which serve to make us sensible, that Vice is really Base and Dishonourable, that it draws after it the bittereſt and most pernicious Consequences that can be imagined, and that we are under the most solid Obligations in the World, to refuse and avoid it with all our Power. And this is to be done so frequently, that the wholesome Conclusions we draw from these Considerations may make a deep Impression upon our Minds, and beget in us an habitual and immoveable Conviction of the reasonableness and necessity of acting accordingly. Having, therefore, opened our Minds to a just and exact Consideration of the true nature of Things, and thereupon formed certain general Judgments or Rules by which we may conduct our Actions so, as to chuse that which is Good,

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Decent and Honourable, and to ſhun and avoid the contrary; and even to prefer that which is more Good, Decent and Honourable, before that which is leſs ſo: It will only remain, that we firmly and adviſedly reſolve with our ſelves to go, in all Caſes, as near as we can, by thoſe Rules; and whether we be more or leſs knowing, endeavour to act according to the beſt of our Skill and Knowledge. And by this means we ſhall be put in a way of making the right and beſt uſe both of our Underſtandings and our Wills, which are the two great Springs from whence our Actions do proceed.

But, further; becauſe it is found, that Men are naturally bent to deſire and proſecute thoſe things which appear to be lovely and amiable; It ſeemeth proper, that we ſhould likewiſe take all fit Occaſions to contemplate and repreſent to our ſelves the amiable nature of this Vertue of Generoſity; that as it is very beautiful in it ſelf, ſo it may appear, in a lively manner ſuch to our Minds. A Beauty will not Charm, if concealed or unobſerved.

obſerved. Nor will Generoſity appear to us Lovely, as it is, unleſs we turn the Eyes of our Minds towards it. It is neceſſary, therefore, in this Caſe, that we apply our ſelves as well to conſider the Characters of Generoſity in the Theory, as likewiſe to obſerve, how beautiful it appears to be in ſuch as exerciſe it in a juſt manner; what a Charm and Engagement it carries with it; how Decent, how Venerable, how Agreeable to our beſt Thoughts, it is. By this means we ſhall be inſpired with the Love and Admiration of it, and conſequently be engaged to purſue it with Vigour.

In a word; though it be of good uſe to ſet before our ſelves, in general, good and wholſome Rules of acting, and to make general Reſolutions of purſuing them, and to ſtrengthen thoſe Reſolutions with ſuch Conſiderations and Motives as are proper for that purpoſe: Yet it ſeems material to be obſerved, that this will hardly be effectual, unleſs we likewiſe enure our ſelves, actually to put in execution the Reſolutions which we make, and reduce thoſe Rules into Practice in particular

ticular Caſes. Experience ſhews, how heedleſs and unvigilant Men are wont to be, and how ineffectual and illuſory their generel Reſolutions often prove: Inſomuch, that for want of confirming themſelves in the Habits of Vertue by particular and repeated Acts, they ſometimes fall into the contrary Habits of Vice, and undo all the good Reſolutions they had formerly made. It is found, that Habits are gained by the frequent repeating of particular Acts, and are confirmed and improved by Uſe and Practice; nor can indeed long ſubſiſt without it. And ſo in particular is the Habit of Generoſity. And, therefore, we muſt of neceſſity enure and accuſtom our ſelves to particular Acts of Generoſity, if we deſire to acquire the Habit of it, or to continue or improve in that Character.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 11. line. 12. add I. p. 13. l. 5. fo *Perfections* read *Perceptions*. p 14. l. after [esteem] make a ;. p. 28. l. 8. r. *com pounded*. p. 33. l. 24. after *that*, add *it*. p. 3 l. 13. r. *make such use of it, as that it ma* p. 42. l. 25. f. *undertake* r. *undervalue*. p. 6 l. 24. f. *on* r. *in*. and l. 25. f. *in* r. *on*.

l. 5. for
14. l. 8.
8. r. com-
it. p. 36.
t it may.
e. p. 65.
n.